

FROM MOJA (ME) TO PAMOJA (WE):  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY

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For the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In the

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University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon

by

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submitted  
by                      Cara Julie Anne Spence                      in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the  
degree of              Doctor of Philosophy

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in                      Interdisciplinary Studies

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## **Abstract**

In partnership with the Canadian Government, the University of Saskatchewan, Nelson Mandela Institute of Science and Technology, and the local Tanzanian non-governmental organization Green Hope, the Mama Kwanza Socio-economic Health Initiative (MKSHI) provides health care and social services to people throughout the Arusha region of Tanzania. This doctoral work draws on the experiences of one critical group served by the Mama Kwanza initiative -- adolescent girls no longer engaged in formal education. Viewed as “critical agents for change” (United Nations Development Program, 2014), the capacities and competencies available to the girls within informal networks are pivotal for their development and growth. Skills and competencies needed within informal sectors, such as communication, negotiation, cooperation, and critical thinking, rely on the development of social skills and spheres. Sachs (2015a) argues that social development and solidarity is both the root and solution to the problem of equity and sustainability. As a pillar within the current global approach to development, the social dimensions of development required to support the girls at this critical stage of adolescence is crucial, with intergenerational implications.

This work examines the Mama Kwanza project as a development partnership from a collectivist epistemological approach. The key argument of this work is that social development, as a pathway for transformative change toward a global culture of equity and sustainability, must be directed by collectivist and relational traditions. Using participatory and ethnographic research methods, a gender-based analysis using Anderson and Woodrow’s (1998) Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis (CVA) framework is conducted to assess the vulnerabilities and capacities of the girls engaged in the Mama Kwanza program. Given the strengths and capabilities of the girls, this work discusses the indicators of social development put forward by the World Bank (2018) and concludes that relational approaches to research, practice, and partnership. A collectivist approach ensures the mutual interest, benefit, responsibility, and respect of all involved in the effort to support sustainable development, address global fragilities, and ‘leave no one behind’ (United Nations, 2018a).

**Key Words:** Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Global Health; Adolescent health; Gender analysis; Social Development; Collective Action



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own. I am a better woman, mother, and person because of these girls, and I humbly imagine my influence on them. When I think of each and every one of the Mama Kwanza girls, I am filled with warmth. Angel told me that this is how you can tell that someone is a true friend. I understand relationships and each other better because of each of them.

The staff of Green Hope and Mama Kwanza - my “*dada*”, “*kaka*”, and “*Rafiki*”. My friends. It is my relationships with each of you that calls me back home.

Last, and never least, my friends and family. We are a collection of those who surround us. Those around me have made me a mighty and passionate woman. Surrounded by never-ending love and support, I continue to thrive and strive to become who I was born to be. You are my family. You are my people. You are my peers. You are my friends. With respect and reciprocation, I hope my work and effort has impacted you as much as your love and support has impacted me. The gratitude for those in my life expands, and never ends.

## **Dedication**

To my beloved children, Omega and Will



## Prologue

*I am introducing myself purposefully in this prologue, for this is relational work... a prologue is a function of narrative writing that signifies a prelude. It encompasses essential information for the reader to make sense of the story to follow... Within Indigenous writing, a prologue structures space for introductions while serving a bridging function ... all that it asks is that I share enough about myself to prepare the reader for this work. (Kovach, 2009, p. 3-4)*

Stories start somewhere, as such, I will begin at the beginning. As the second child born to a teenage mother, I faced the ever-present promise and possibility of the ‘poverty trap’ (Sachs, 2006). My father’s imprisonment, a pattern that would continue for the duration of my life, and my parents’ fortuitous divorce, forged the strength, courage, willingness, and desire to understand and break the cycle of addiction and abuse. My mother remarried us out of poverty, and I grew up in a ‘normal’ middle-class blended family of Scottish and French heritage in small-town life on the Saskatchewan prairies. We settled in a rural, German Mennonite community where the faces and surnames were clearly all related. Blonde-haired and blue-eyed. This environment taught me the best and the worst of human connection and community. As an outsider family in a small homogeneous town, I felt entirely accepted and comfortable to attend the Mennonite Brethren Church, on my own accord, from the age of 7 years until my late teens. Born again, I aligned my will to that of my god. Forever curious and waking up to other ways of the world, I also began to notice the overt resistance and refusal of my people to accept differences. My beloved neighbours and guides turned out to be racist and homophobic right before my newly seeing eyes. The binding force of god’s love turned out to be exclusionary, conditional, and hetero-normative. This exclusion and harsh treatment of the different and vulnerable was not what my Jesus would do. Since then, I developed into a vegetarian, quasi-Buddhist, studying, practicing, and teaching the science and philosophy of yoga and meditation for over 20 years.

I challenge myself to recognize my position and the intersectionality that comes with being white, middle class, and privileged alongside the reality of also being a single mother for over 18 years to two children -- an Indigenous brown-skinned girl, and a blue-eyed blonde-haired boy. I look out to seek and find the systemic barriers and hurdles to which a white gaze is often blind. I do this for my development, and I do it for the worldly sake of my children. I speak from the other side of feminism and a fortunate economic position within the global

system. I benefit from a white supremacist heterosexual, patriarchal system. I have the added privilege of being a woman in this advanced system at this late stage in the capitalist game. I do not bear the scarlet letter of a privileged white male in a system of overt inequity and disparity, but I am now recognized as his equal counterpart. What I do have, what I have received, is a position of privilege. Along with that privilege, the sense of agency that can initiate change. As a woman, I see it differently. As a woman, I cannot let some things go unsaid. The point of my feminist foundation is to speak out and give voice to limits of freedom and choice, and call out where basic needs are unmet. These are the rights and the needs we cannot go without if we are indeed to be self-determined and prosperous people.

As a fourth-generation feminist woman, I can and do live entirely independently, providing solely for myself and my children. I am a provider and a mother. Good cop and bad cop. Soft and hard. Mom and dad. With this, an expected state of freedom and independence has come to be accepted as a fundamental right. I cannot imagine any other way. Yet, some threads bind, paths cross, and roads laid. Others, indeed, do not experience their gender the same way. I reject the argument that feminist scholars are ‘outsiders’ that disrupt gender relations only to interject Western norms (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005; Kalu, 1996; Teboh, 1994). In environments and situations where gender relations are unjust, insecure, or unsafe, these relations, I argue, must be disrupted. Such disruption of gender relations is happening globally. These changes are invariably influenced and informed across the globe. As gender relations are sorting themselves out, we may rightfully be moving toward the benefit and best case for all. Women have a unique role in the development process. With a central role in cultural creation and replication, women -- young and old, black and white -- are actively changing the world. Yet, women in ‘developing’ contexts persist at the margins of the global system, and women in ‘developed’ nations are publicly warding off and calling out gender tensions. Without my intent to impose Western feminist norms on all people and all places, it is clear that women have a central role to play in regeneration of values and priorities. This central role of women cannot be overestimated as attention shifts from primarily economic and material development, toward a broader scope of social, intergenerational, and informal avenues for growth and sustainable development.

My own social experiences oscillate from my theoretical and academic knowledge accumulated over decades of study, and the effort to relate my knowledge to practical everyday

life and people. As such, I have attempted to take my theoretical insight into the world of applied research into practical experiences, applicable skills, and action plans. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) remind me, “the deeper way to participatory research is to make *skills* in a domain, not *statements* about a domain, as the primary intended outcome” (p. 59, emphasis added). By attempting to transfer applicable skills based on theoretical knowledge, we gain a deeper degree of knowledge about the workings of the world. Although this is the ideal for this academic endeavor, the journey has not always been a bountiful experience of ongoing openings of opportunities and doorways in my understandings. Learning and growing are difficult. Change is hard. Transformation is unsteady, and the world can be harsh. Facing the challenges of our social world takes much courage. To do so inevitably brings forth conflict and dissonance. What makes it all possible and palatable are the people who surround me -- some of the smartest, wisest, most inspirational, knowledgeable, helpful, kindest, brilliant humanists I could find. I have had the opportunity to work and connect with people from all sectors, all levels, and states of being. I have connected my eyes with diplomats and policymakers; prostitutes and drug dealers; addicts and abusers; seekers and finders. Social research and my exploration into the social world -- structures, agents, similarities, differences -- has provided me with an inside knowledge that I feel all people have the right and need to know. The profound insight that we are all participants in the same game, within a shared space. This feeling drives me to share. And I do. I look for ways to converse and connect. I give my knowledge and labour freely. I overwork and overshare. I sit and bear overtly racist and discriminatory ‘opinions’ expressed as right and valid as my own ‘facts.’ Evidence of the division and disparity of our social world is all around us. Yet, I look for cohesion and collaboration. Beyond difference and divide. Intersections and emergence. Divergence and convergence. Sharing and caring.

My work has led me down the path of development: international, social, personal, community, and sustainable development. If this work was born out of ‘moments along the way’, then the gestation has been ongoing for over twenty years. My introduction to the world of higher learning was deep and wide. My first degree was International Studies, an interdisciplinary degree that steeped me into the then novel concept of ‘Globalization’. This central concept linked five disciplines: geography, economics, political studies, history, and sociology. A second undergraduate degree, and then a subsequent Master of Arts (M.A.)

declared my specialization in the discipline of sociology. After a swim and deep dive in the disciplined pool of knowledge, I returned to the wide seas of interdisciplinary doctoral studies. An interdisciplinary introduction to learning was of immeasurable value to my future scholarship and professional development. Creating new intellectual and cognitive connections merged to form multiple disciplinary pathways. These interconnections allowed for broader learning to complex human problems. An interdisciplinary entry-point into formal education also taught me that the more I know, the more I recognize I do not know. As Socrates pontificates, the more I learn, the less I know. There is a wisdom and knowledge that exists well beyond my own. From this insight, I deeply value and am invested in understanding other ways of knowing and being. This accumulation of diverse knowledge increasingly and inevitably had me question my understanding. This questioning stirred me to challenge the status quo of a damaging, destructive, and marginalizing global system that determines the relations and threatens the fate of humanity. In response, I consciously chose to be part of a change toward a healthy, harmonious, stable, equitable, sustainable planet Earth that we call 'home'.

The 'moment' I found my interest in Africa occurred before my academic journey began. As an 18-year-old Caucasian Canadian female, I saw my first black African woman on a highly produced TV travel series. This exposure occurred at the time I began to critically examine my community and started looking for other truths. In this moment, I felt that this woman, and those before her, were my ancestors existing long before me. I saw a depth and a knowing reflected in her eyes of things I did not know and did not understand. I felt compelled to see what she sees. I felt the urge to know where we, humanity, began. And even more so, where we are going. Fifteen years later, I would finally arrive in the birthplace of humanity, the Republic of Tanzania. Only 400 km from where Lucy, the remains of the first human, was discovered. The years were spent consciously and unconsciously preparing for this journey into Africa. After three university degrees, searching and learning in and around 'globalization', 'colonization', imperialism', 'capitalism', 'socialism', 'equality', 'humanism', I felt fully prepared for my first fieldwork visit to Tanzania in 2012. It turns out I was poorly prepared and much mistaken. In fact, for all that I thought I understood, I now know that I knew nothing beyond my narrative, which safely secured me in my position of privilege. Since that first landing, I have returned to East Africa several times. Each time I land, I see a little bit wider, I understand a little bit broader, and I feel a little bit deeper. As they say, the more you see, the

more you know.

The time between 1996 and 2012 spent late nights studying, mostly about ‘poverty’ and the ‘social determinants of health’. In a Western academic institution on the Canadian prairies, these studies invariably led to Canadian Indigenous peoples and communities. I became intimately involved in Indigenous cultures and peoples. Between intimate personal and family relationships, to structured homelessness, health, healing, and poverty studies, my connections and ties to the First Nations and Métis peoples of Canada sparked my commitment to social justice and structural change. Fueled by learning of the consequences of intergenerational trauma, syndemic (Singer, 2009) and epigenetic science (Bird, 2007), compounded by centuries of colonialism, impoverishment, and hatred of the ancestors of the very land in which we live, I am called to give voice. Like other settlers, I have been horrified to learn of our shared history. But I find myself even more deeply disturbed at its justified persistence. I work within the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation (TRC, 2015), because when we know better, we must do better.

From my early readiness to look at the world outside my own, I knew we would need to take the time to do the work of learning from each other. Collaboration and partnerships became the link that threads my thinking and seeking together. The question became how to work together in genuine partnership, sharing, and co-creation of knowledge. Community-based and community-led research grounded in participatory and engaged methods became my research home. I recognize and accept that people are experts and drivers in their life situations, solutions found at the source of the problem, and change is realized by one’s willingness and capacity for adaptation. If a development project fails to recognize the value of local knowledge and the imperative for the project to have a role in everyday life, then the development project will fail. It is faulty and foolish to imagine the possibility of allowing ancestors and generations of Indigenous and local knowledge destroyed, disregarded, and unused. Clearly all community-based or ‘development’ efforts must be driven by those who are involved and impacted. This idea may sound basic and the most obvious of common sense, and yet, it eludes us.

The impacts of a globalized economic capitalist system that extends into all social, political, structural, and environmental arenas make it imperative that the globalization experiment -- our global ambitions; our shared global development agenda -- requires critique. ‘Development’ is a powerful tool in the globalization agendas, and the concept of ‘development’ is ideologically loaded, yet it persists (Edelman & Haugerud, 2005).

Recognizing the bias of the development idea, rooted in Western ideology and hegemony, is now accepted as a normative concept and approach. To rectify this bias, I draw on the process of reflexivity through self-location (Kovach, 2009), where I ‘bend back’ what I have learned in the research field with self-analysis and consciousness (Wilson, 2008). My position of reflexivity, including my basis of knowledge, values, and comments on my worldview, allows me to further draw upon and extend what I have learned to my own world. In this way, I attempt to use the research, teachings, and learnings to co-create my understanding of our shared world. I cannot speak for others, but I can speak for myself. It is my position as a researcher and social scientist to take what I know intellectually and theoretically and apply it; and consider what is understood and expand on what is known technically and scholastically. The point of my work, however, is to be applicable, or it will be of no practical purpose or meaningful ends. As an ethnographer, I see knowledge as based on everyday life and cultural interpretation, rather than generalizations and imposition. My role and research lie within the ‘middle space’ - the interaction and translation between practical and theoretical knowledge - and I strive to contribute to both fields. The ‘middle ground’ (Dei, 2002, p. 170) and ‘ethical space’ (Ermine, 1999) is where social development and collective action toward equality and sustainability has some promise. This is the philosophical space that locates my work.

A reasonable question would be ‘why’? Why would I invest such emotional, financial, personal investment on a subject that, as 1983 Nobel Prize winner Brenda McClintock puts it, “provides a motivating force for the endless hours of intense, often grueling labor” (McClintock as cited in Keller, 1984, p. 197-198). Through the reflexive analysis of this work itself, I recognize myself as a producer of knowledge, and as such, question why I do what I do. I am required to understand my motivation, inspiration, drive, and interest. And time and time again, I come back to the same place -- because our survival relies on it. To recognize the forces that have come to be at this place and time of humanity. To call them out. To be called out. The first time I walked into a grocery store after my first visit to Tanzania, and my whole day’s affairs completed in just 10 minutes in this one store, I knew it. I knew I am positioned to speak about how the system operates and works to maintain itself. I recognize my privilege and ease, my leisure time I have for ‘just me’ and ‘self-care’. Spas and nails. Hair and massage. Gym time and playtime. Meditation and prayer. I have ample time, intelligence, access, and resources to put towards global sustainability and equity. I knew it was my time to give some back, and to go

with a little less. And dare I suggest the same of others? How my work applies, and words inspire, ultimately depends, as Lynch (2000, p. 273) states: “what reflexivity does, what it threatens to expose, what it reveals and who it empowers depends upon who does it and how they go about it”.

The shift and transformation required for sustainable development is a critical global problem. As the local is reflected in the global, as above so is below, I will apply my learnings back to the world I know. To my world and my people. This work is for thought leaders and policymakers who are working in the global sustainable development arena. To my peers, who are working in the fields of research, social justice, and self-determination. To my colleagues and collaborators, as we share our expertise and find a way through complex problems. It is for my friends and family, and their friends and families, who let me share my experiences and understandings of our globalized and interconnected world. For my mentors, so they might be proud. For me, so I can remember where I’ve been. For humanity, so we can see where we are going. As a Western woman, arguably free and empowered, I have come to realize that we are not independent and separate, but that we are all in this together and we are not alone. The experience of social isolation and loneliness are widespread. Debilitating mental health, suicide, and addiction at epidemic rates. On my side of the globe, we have weakened our skills to relate, to connect, to collaborate. When it comes to social development, it is our weakest link. However, awareness and understanding results in conscious and informed choices. The capacity is there to influence and connect community with governing structures and processes to empower people in their own lives. This shift alone can become political, transformative, and evolutionary. Central to this work, I stand by the position that social inclusion is intrinsic to sustainable development, and its success relies on the importance placed on relationships and collective action. A collectivist approach provides adolescents with the social development necessary to meet the goals of sustainable development and the future of our planet.

## 1. Introduction

*You think education is expensive, try ignorance.  
(Landers, 1975)*

Following the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the global community refined development priorities and outlined the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), setting the development agenda towards the year 2030 (United Nations (UN), 2014). At the post-2015 discussions, ending the MDG era, the UN drafted a refined development agenda entitled *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (UN, 2015a). In a thoroughly globalized world, the SDGs recognize the necessity for cooperation and partnership on shared challenges and interests across nations through localized development needs. The primary goal and most significant challenge for global sustainability is to eliminate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, with the pledge to ‘leave no one behind’ through a foundation based on global partnerships for sustainability as a collective journey (UN, 2018a). Global partnerships emphasize global solidarity through the integration and linking of networks and knowledge to secure the health of the planet and all its occupants (human and animal). As an overarching framework with 17 broad goals and 169 targets (UN, 2015a), the SDGs frame the discourse, directives, and funding decisions in the distribution of global resources, shaped and driven by prevailing development ideology. Verma and Peterson (2018) confirm:

effective implementation of these goals requires a collective and concerted effort to build a culture of sustainability, draw knowledge from multiple disciplines, and implement evidence-based programs and policies. (p. 1)

The UN (2012) reiterates the need to promote intergenerational and intercultural solidarity to achieve sustainable development, and collaboratively direct and prioritize needs for future generations.

The 2030 Agenda places a particular focus on youth and adolescent girls to meet the implementation challenges of 2030 (Alfven et al. 2019). Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the UN, stated in his 2017 Sustainable Development Goals report that:

[G]ender inequality is still deeply entrenched, as manifested in the slow progress in women’s representation in political life, in decision-making within their own households, and the violence, most often with impunity, that women and girls face in all societies. Young people continue to face alarmingly high rates of unemployment, and their voices are to be sufficiently included in the deliberations affecting their lives and futures. (UN, 2017, p. 2)



The SDGs expect to be particularly impactful on upcoming generations, with the goal of providing a safer, healthier, and sustainable planet. Verma and Peterson (2018) recognize engagement of adolescents as the foundation for sustainable development. Kleinert and Horton (2016) argue “adolescents should be actively involved in working towards the SDGs at all levels -- as agents for change at the community, national, and international levels” (p. 2355). Adolescents are developmentally ready to engage and come with vibrancy and optimism that brings energy and enthusiasm when positively involved (Crone & Dahl, 2012). The demonstration of optimism and passion inspires social change (McMichael, 2016; Steinberg, 2015). However, the failure to include and invest in adolescents and young adults can potentiate alienation and destructive rather than constructive and cohesive behaviours. The Lancet Commission for Adolescent Health (Patton et al., 2016) stresses that a sense of agency is critical for adolescents to exercise self-determination and demonstrate meaningful participation in decision-making. As “critical agents of change” (United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2014), adolescents play a critical role in shaping and realizing the priorities of the 2030 Agenda. Participation of adolescents in local action and future decision making is required for sustainable societies. This necessitates supports, capacities, and opportunities for development are directed explicitly towards adolescents.

Lifecycle development begins to peak in adolescence, expressed in terms of physical fitness, skeletal and bone health, neurodevelopment, cognition, hormonal and sexual maturation, social and emotional patterns, gender roles, and partnerships and parenthood (Mishra, Cooper & Kuh, 2010; Patton, 2016; Pratt & Frost, 2017). As a critical epidemiological transition, adolescence marks important proximal social determinants of health, such as education, employment, marriage, parenthood, social networking, digital influence, and health care needs (Crone & Dahl, 2012; Marcus & Harper, 2014; Sawyer et al. 2012). Attitudes and influences of peers are most pronounced at this stage, with social forces even higher and more complicated in the context of the global culture. As social engagement is vital for healthy development, social inclusion during adolescence is essential for individual, community, and intergenerational health and sustainable development (Banati, 2018). Building active peer and mentorship relationships also develops and supports social competencies, including communicating, connecting, networking, and exchanging, and can create an environment for youth to direct future planning towards equitable and sustainable development.

Gender relations, the socially constructed set of norms and expected behavior between men and women, constitute a root cause of social exclusion, and hugely influential in sustainable development (Sachs, 2015a). Gender is a critical indicator of the social determinants of health (UN, 2010), across all health outcomes (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 2011), and for lifecycle development (Kuruvilla et al., 2018). Gender biases affect most spheres of social, economic, and political life, and must be considered essential for social transformation and change (Boudet et al., 2012). The socialization of girls impacts not only them, but also their families, communities, and future generations. Understanding the gender dynamics of a context reveals factors and variables that may perpetuate diminished self-esteem, limited socio-economic opportunities, and a lack of social protection (Hobbs & Rice, 2013). For instance, women's and girls' positions of vulnerability and insecurity often align with changes in family structure, economic stability, and lifecycle transitions. Yet, cultural and social norms can be promoted to perpetuate the notion and belief of equality and sustainability of women's and girls' lives. Acknowledging that adolescence is a critical phase within the lifecycle, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2011) notes a global trend towards single-parent families, with an estimated 40% of families in most countries worldwide being single parent-led by 2030. Enabling an adolescent girl to exercise her choices to defer motherhood until she can support herself and her child in the most critical period of the lifecycle, the first 1000 days of life, is an investment imperative (Black & Hurley, 2016). To have choice and critical thinking is essential when transformative change can happen in a single generation.

Social development is at the leading edge of development policies and a priority throughout the SDG 2030 Agenda. Seeking to ensure the health and wellbeing of all people and the planet, social development further defines and refines the requirements for human development, while realizing the impact and reach of the social sphere. The goals of inclusion, empowerment, gender equality, and alternative economic models align with the three core global commitments of poverty eradication, promotion of productive employment, and ensuring social integration (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2014). In short, social development involves the fair distribution of opportunities and resources to ensure social justice with full inclusion and participation in social, economic, and political means (UNESCO, 2014). The World Bank (2018) indices for measuring social

development include: 1) gender equity; 2) access to basic needs; 3) interpersonal safety and trust; 4) intergroup cohesion and shared goals; and 5) participation and engagement in civil society (p. 3-4). The SDG agenda recognizes that robust social development is necessary to achieve sustainable, inclusive, and equitable economic growth, political advancement, and environmental protection.

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (2015) proposed a strategic framework for the SDGs to address social development and sustainability. One area identified is the necessity to include diverse social groups, in particular, youth, women, older persons, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous peoples to address cross-cutting issues with sustainability (UNDESA, 2015). Aligning with the World Bank (2018) indicators of social development, this work extends the ‘post-development’ tradition that imagines other paths to development. Thinkers, including Escobar (1995), Ermine (2007), Esteva (2010), and Sachs (2015), acknowledge that not all societies and people follow the same trajectory or value system towards profit and accumulation. As economic, political, and social development options have narrowed so sharply, socialist or other alternatives are discredited or completely ignored. It is necessary to recognize and call out the broader political and economic forces at play when designing programs and making decisions. Global sustainability requires interdisciplinary, inter-sectoral, and cross-cultural approaches to address complex, interlinked, and cross-cutting problems. As Raikes et al. (2017) argue, new conceptualizations of development require contribution from diverse perspectives and contexts. A focus on social development provides an opportunity to realize the impact and reach of the social sphere across the global agenda.

As a crucial precursor of sustainable development, social development advances the social and practical changes necessary to harness joint agency (Sachs, 2015). A collective effort to build a culture of sustainability lies in shifting individuals from personal interest and immediate needs toward collective understandings, multiple perspectives, and social support. Social development widens choices and options for change beyond individualism and consumerism, towards global cooperation for sustainability and shared prosperity. Participation, inclusion, and engagement are entry points for personal agency and collective action, while a sense of control over our lives reaches deep into the sphere of individual health and wellness (Sen & Ostlin, 2011). Adolescents are growing up in increasingly disempowered contexts

worldwide (Verma & Petersen, 2018). A paradigm shift is required and begins with exploring shared strengths, thoughts, and ideas. Hence, inclusiveness and participation in thought, conversations, and decision-making are critical. Engagement is powerful. Power is found in inspired action and creates transformative change. However, the power of disappointment and disillusionment is visible and felt when there are limited choices, and options seem few. In this way, knowledge becomes empowered, and allows for other forms of knowing, being, and doing to develop pathways towards sustainability.

Verma and Petersen (2018) argue that global partnerships and collaborations are foundational to achieving the SDGs through active networks which optimize the knowledge, expertise, and resources and vector innovative efforts and sustainable solutions. However, Findlay, et al., (2015) warn about the uncritical assumption that partnering solves all problems without probing underlying power and partnership dynamics. The SDGs are a collective responsibility. Establishing a sacred, shared, and ‘ethical space’ (Ermine, 1999) is where divergent worldviews can come together to negotiate what is essential in life and collectively navigate the future. Unraveling the influence of a capitalist bias and the unsustainable reality of the status quo, Bauman (1998) argues that an essential philosophical shift is needed to re-imagine sustainable communities in the face of the effects of globalization and neoliberalism. Investing in social development to support true partnerships and collaborations strengthens the capacity of both formal and informal systems to support an alternative ideology, discourse, and practice to promote sustainable development, at ideological roots.

The Mama Kwanza Socio-economic Health Initiative (MKSHI) has worked in partnership with the Canadian Government, the University of Saskatchewan, Nelson Mandela Institute of Science and Technology, and the local Tanzanian non-governmental organization (NGO) Green Hope Organization since 2012 to provide health care and social services to mothers, children, orphans, and families throughout the Arusha region of Tanzania (TZ). This doctoral research draws on the experiences of one critical group served by the Mama Kwanza initiative: adolescent girls, ages 15-25 no longer engaged in formal education. With social inclusion as a pillar of sustainable development, this research seeks to determine the capacities and vulnerabilities for social development and the sense of collectivity among this group of adolescent girls to meet shared needs and desired futures, and to extend these reflexive learnings to a broader context. In the situation where an adolescent girl is no longer engaged nor has a

direct pathway within the formal education system, skill and capacity development to survive, grow, and develop through informal systems is critical. Embodied within informal systems are connections and linkages found in social networks and interest groups, which are supported and strengthened by social development. Social development offers adolescent girls the skills and capacity to lead social change, while increasing the role of personal and individual agency to harness the ability for joint collective action. While understanding the dimensions of social development, this study hypothesizes that through the capacity building efforts of the Mama Kwanza partnership, the development project will impact the options and opportunities available to the girls to leverage social connections and collective capacities and shape their trajectories within the informal sector. Social development for girls at this critical stage of adolescence has intergenerational implications and is essential to understand and support in practical ways. To offer practical support and strategies for adolescent girls within informal sectors, an understanding of the social realities of the girls is needed.

This work also examines the Mama Kwanza project as a development partnership from a collectivist epistemology and theoretical approach. The key argument of this work is that relational and collectivist traditions are required to inform and direct social development as a pathway for transformative change and a shift of global culture towards sustainability and equity. As applied research, the discussion extends beyond the local research context and applies findings to a global context. The research questions analyze the practices and policies guiding the development agenda (SDGs) and development programming (MKSHI) to address the local needs of adolescent girls, and the possibilities and limitations of social development in the local/global context. The principles and practices that support social inclusion and collective action found in local contexts provide insight into the opportunities and challenges for sustainable development globally (UN, 2018).

The following chapter presents the background of the work, including the theoretical and policy approaches to international development and the research context. The SDGs are the current framework for development that extends efforts for sustainable change to both ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’ countries. Areas of global efforts have long included a focus on economic and political development, later extending priorities to issues surrounding the environment and human sustainability. Social inclusion is now recognized as pivotal to human survival. The central position of this work claims that that social development and collective

action are required for the sustainability of the planet and the continuation of its people. Adolescents are argued as critical for sustainable development (Harper, et al., 2018; Jacquez, Vaughan & Wagner, 2013; Sheehan et al., 2017; UN, 2018b). Chapter 2 also discusses adolescence as a crucial period in lifecycle development and highlights the role of gender in the replication and adoption of social norms and practices. The context of development for Tanzania, including the history and legacy of development, the imposed system of education, the established role of women and girls, and the potential for leveraging the informal sector for social development of adolescents to respond to local/global sustainability efforts is discussed.

Chapter 3 intercepts the agency/structure dichotomist debate and argues that the involvement and investment in the social, or middle, space between groups is where collective action and social change is most pronounced. Social science attempts to understand social structure, and in turn, behaviour change. Giddens' (1984) Structuration Theory involves two relational spheres: 1) structure, which are rules, resources, institutions; and 2) agency, understood as action against structures to shift normative and acceptable behaviours. Giddens (1991) argues that adolescents are active agents within the determining structures of social contexts, global economic, and political systems. However, the limited agency is a pronounced limitation of global capitalism, particularly for groups most marginalized within the structure as "non-profit producing agents" (Hall & Lamont, 2010, p. 240). Gauri, Woolcock and Desai (2012) argue that it is the limitations of agency that hinders the initiation of change and the harnessing of collective organization. With inequality and poverty of top priority for global sustainability, the shift towards social development is best supported by collectivist traditions and practices. Ostrom's (1990) *Theory of Collective Action* serves as a framework for individuals to harness joint agency. Social development strengthens collective action and takes the notion of social inclusion into action by leveraging the strengths within the group towards the mutual benefit of all. Initiatives that draw on joint agency and collaborative partnerships are a sufficient force in the creation of innovative environmental and social programs (Sengupta, 2015; Woolcock, Szreter, & Rao, 2011). Responding to a "condition of necessity" (Defourny & Develtere, 1999, p. 23) the social economy is mainly represented by NGOs who are in an influential position to leverage collective action and resources through principles of solidarity and reciprocal relations supporting the informal sector. As a 'third path to development' (Birchall, 1997; Defourny & Develtere, 1999), collective organization potentiates social

inclusion and transformative change for the participants in groups, such as the Mama Kwanza ‘Girls Group’.

Collective action and principles of solidarity are intrinsic to a collectivist and relational worldview. An Indigenous epistemology is inherently relational and guided by the four principles of respect, reciprocity, relevance, and responsibility (Markiewicz, 2012; Moniz, 2015; Pidgeon et al., 2002). Lovel (2003) argues the critical shift from the individual towards the collective and relational aspects of agency requires the change from the subjected self to focus instead on social relations of historical conditions and political action transformation. Feminist philosophy views capacity and empowerment as a determinant within an environment of “relational agency” (Kennelly, 2011, p. 112), and the interactions that sustain relations are essential for understanding the capacity to take joint action within the public sphere. Drawing on an Indigenous epistemology, Dei, Hall, and Rosenberg (2000 as cited in Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005) conceptualize Indigenous scholarship in this way:

body of knowledge associated with the long-term occupancy of a certain place. This knowledge refers to traditional norms and social values, as well as to mental constructs that guide, organize, and regulate the people’s way of living experience and knowledge of a given social group, and forms the basis of decision making in the face of challenges both familiar and unfamiliar ... This body of knowledge is diverse, and complex given the histories, cultures, and lived realities of peoples. (p. 6)

As such, an Indigenous epistemology provides the conceptual framework for this work that recognizes the co-learning, co-creation, and integration of knowledge (Hoppers, 2002), wherein the ‘third space’ (Bhabha, 2004; Routledge, 1996) new ways of thinking and doing can take shape and give way (Ermine, 1995). The lens of ‘Multiple-Eyed-Seeing’ (Bartlett, Marshall, Marshall, & Iwama, 2012) is integrated into the study’s approach through a reflexive analysis to ‘fill the missing middle’ in knowledge production (May & Perry, 2011). This reflexive process of ‘data contemplation’ is steeped in the research experiences and relationships to connect all parts of the research process in a collective whole (LaVallie & Sasakamoose, 2019). As partnerships and joint efforts are leading development approaches, collectivist and Indigenous traditions provide a conceptual framework and significant possibilities for relational and collaborative strategies toward social development and global sustainability. This underutilized knowledge holds significant potential for social development and global sustainability.

To frame and understand the research context, the analysis uses Anderson and Woodrow’s (1998) capacity and vulnerability analysis (CVA) as a gender-based framework

specifically developed to design and measure humanitarian interventions. A CVA assists in the assessment of the needs and strengths of a group and is participatory. When identifying everyday experiences among adolescent girls in Arusha, including patterns of behaviour and limiting constraints, a CVA looks to identify factors that may not otherwise be considered when implementing development strategies and programming (Birks, Powell, & Hatfield, 2017). The joint agency and capacity of the girls is discussed concerning the physical/material; social/organizational; and, motivational/attitudinal barriers. The underlying vulnerabilities and needs of the group are also discussed to analyze sustainable solutions and pathways to collective action for the local/global community. This research builds on the capacities approach, leading from Sen's (1999) view of expanding freedom and choice to make the capacities and agency of an individual. The capacities approach is also commonly used to design policies and programs as a normative framework for developing wellbeing and bringing about transformative change in gender relations (Nussbaum, 2000; Nussbaum, 2011).

Where social life is the focus, relational, and qualitative approaches to research and practice are most appropriate. Chapter 4 presents the qualitative methodology and research questions that guide this research. This ethnographic study supports multiple participatory and community-based research methods, including: 1) interviews; 2) participatory diagramming; 3) group discussions and informal conversations; and 4) focused ethnographic field notes. The methods are used to address the following research questions:

- Q1. What are the vulnerabilities and capacities of the adolescent girls of Mama Kwanza Girls Group capacity building program?
- Q2. How are social inclusion, mutual support, and collectivity demonstrated by the girls?
- Q3. Does the Mama Kwanza project support the needs and desired futures of the adolescent girls involved in the development project?
- Q4. How can social development support collective action?

Within these four guiding research questions, the following six objectives seek to:

- 1. Identify what makes adolescent girls vulnerable in terms of physical, social, and motivational barriers;
- 2. Identify the support, strengths, and capacities available to support the social development of girls;
- 3. Determine the shared needs and goals within the group;



4. Identify the elements of social inclusion and collectivity among the participants, including factors that lead towards collective action and factors that deter the potential of the collective group;
5. Identify the relevance of Mama Kwanza programming to meet the needs of the girls;
6. Understand how a collectivist approach can advance social development.

The Mama Kwanza ‘Girls Group’ participants engaged in a series of participatory mapping and group discussion activities that shared stories, identified priorities, challenges, and mutual help and support. Participants provided data from personal interviews and informal conversations. Stakeholder interviews with the staff and directors of the Mama Kwanza initiative discussed the goals and objectives of the Mama Kwanza initiative and provided an understanding of the vulnerabilities and capacities of the Girl’s Group participants more broadly. As relationships developed and conversations unfolded, trust and openness allowed for greater depth and more reliable data provided by the participants. The value of the ethnographic notes and contextual experiences cannot be overestimated, as these served as the primary sources of data and findings relying primarily on recorded observations and reflections. In development theory and practice, Gauri, Woolcock and Desai (2012) describe the strength of participatory and ethnographic approaches to discover the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ that is not otherwise uncovered by structured surveys. Socially ascribed and habitual behaviour embeds underlying belief systems that are mostly unseen. An ethnographic approach reveals this emic or ‘common’ knowledge (Denzin, 1997). The depth of analysis is supported by multiple field visits conducted between 2012-2018, and the implication of these findings continue to be relevant as work and involvement in the research context continue.

Ethnographic observations and field notes contextualize the discussion for a gender-based analysis of agency and capacity of the Mama Kwanza initiative. Personal interviews allowed for specific questioning and detailed responses from participants, while group discussions and conversations shared individual stories, perspectives, and histories. Visual methods, including diagramming, mapping, and photo journaling, supported a deepening in understanding of the context and environment. Visual methods helped to bridge the language limitations of the researcher and provide imagery for the reader (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Samuels et al., 2015). A photobook was developed for this work [Attachment A] as a visual way to ‘see’ the research setting and reflect on its socio-historic context. The aim of the

qualitative methodology and ethnographic approach work was to capture the ‘living knowledge’ (Swantz, 2016) of the participants and support an Indigenous and relational approach to knowledge production (Kovach, 2009). In turn, the method and approach contribute “other ways of knowing, of being, and of doing” (Wilson, 2008, p. 11) and “multiple ways of knowing” (Dei, 2002, p. 170) to the sustainable development conversation. Through the study of the Mama Kwanza capacity building initiative and the young women who participated in the programming, the analysis of multiple qualitative methods developed a local/global understanding of social development and collective action.

Chapter 5 presents the research data and findings of this research. Detailed accounts, field notes, and illustrations demonstrate the social realities of the participating girls. Descriptive data introduce the background, family structure, educational level, ethnic and religious connections, as well as the challenges and aspirations of the participating girls, generated from personal interviews, participatory methods, and informal conversations. Resulting data from participatory mapping exercises and group discussions, including the participants’ own journey maps and outcomes of the mind mapping discussions, are presented. The spatial map displays a consolidation of individual spaghetti maps created by the participants to reveal social and geographical connections among the girls. Findings are discussed in terms of physical, social, and motivational capacities and vulnerabilities, and highlight how the girls describe their unmet needs and identified priorities. Evidence of the ability for the Mama Kwanza capacity building project and the NGO Green Hope to meet the needs and expectations is supplemented by stakeholder interview data, ethnographic field notes, and detailed observations.

The discussion and conclusions in chapter 6 are framed by the World Bank (2018) indices of social development which include: gender equity, access to basic needs, interpersonal safety and trust, intergroup cohesion and shared goals, and participation and engagement. Limitations to social development, such as heightened individualism and limited levels of empowered agency, are explored. The analysis suggests broader implications and significance of this work as it applies to local/global possibilities for social development and global sustainability among girls and adolescents worldwide. Collectivist approaches to meet the challenges of an individualistic and capitalist model of development are highlighted, and topics for further research suggested.

## 2. Background

*It is impossible to realize our goals while discriminating against half the human race. As study after study has taught us, there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. (Kofi Annan, 2006)*

### 2.1 Global Development

The concept of ‘development’ as generated from a Western paradigm marginalizes other ways of seeing and doing (Escobar, 1995; Mawere & Awuah-Nyamekye, 2013; Mohanty, 1986; Sen & Ostlin, 2011). Linked to the concept of ‘progress’, development is employed as a growth model associated with mass consumption and urbanization, measured in terms of economic and material welfare. The emergence of the 1950s ‘development agenda’ imposed the norms and values of the Western Eurocentric culture onto the Southern hemisphere, or so-called ‘undeveloped countries’ with the intention to include the latter in global economic markets (Bauman, 1998; Brohman, 1995; Edelman & Haugerud, 2005). Decades followed with the establishment of various agencies and institutions tasked with the ‘implementation’ of development goals *on* recipient countries and cultures. Recognition and assurance of access to merit goods, such as universal health care and the protection of universal human rights, remained secondary to the liberal economic market demands (Donnelly, 2013; Pogge, 2008). Escobar (1995) argues that the implementation of such a development agenda erroneously assumes that the ‘non-developed’ countries equally desire to be included in the global economic system and become ‘developed’ within a Western model. In reality, the imposition of the Western assumptions of development have deeply challenged embedded cultural norms and values of many receiving countries (Mawere & Awuah-Nyamekye, 2013).

Notions of development trace back to the 1700s and the rise of Western industrial capitalism (Edelman & Haugerud, 2005), which through massive productive forces, motivated people and populations to believe that more was better than less, and material progress was the means to have all ends met (Henderson, Benson, & Findlay, 2000). Development measures were to ensure that (material) ‘progress’ could continue, arguably for all people in all places. With this step forward, the dichotomy of the ‘developed’ and the ‘undeveloped’ world began to take shape. The next phase of development was to emulate the level of growth and patterns of the ‘developed’ world in ‘undeveloped’ nations, which would require stimulating economies and raising ‘living standards’. Evaluated by material and economic outcomes, poverty became a

target measure and observed as an intergenerational pattern, creating a ‘cycle of poverty’ and a ‘poverty trap’ (Sachs, 2006). Economic performance became the leading goal in an increasingly global financing system, shifting interaction from the exchange between hands, to the ‘invisible hand’ of the market. The implementation of foreign systems of finance, politics, education, and social protection ‘liberalized’ most governments. In contrast, labour and financial systems became deregulated and social services privatized and subsidized through user fees. Responding to pressures of global markets and foreign political demands, structural adjustment programs (SAPs) were widely implemented across developing nations beginning in the 1980s (Edelman, & Haugerud, 2005). Overall, official development policies and financing have not operationalized well in most developing countries, with the most devastating impacts on the world’s most impoverished and vulnerable. The result is seen in highly uneven economic development, deepening global economic inequality, social disparity widening, and government authority eroded (UNDP, 2014; Veltmeyer, 2014; World Bank, 2019).

A massive sector of nongovernment organizations (NGOs) has become positioned within the development arena to fill the gap that the SAPs created. The reduction of government provision of essential social services and public goods created a market for ‘local’ agencies to deliver services and receive foreign funds. The rise of the NGO sector has had a profound impact and influence on development theory and practices. NGOs are often set up and sustained by funds secured from international donors to achieve specific outcomes and have become a legitimate method for directing and distributing targeted international development funding (Shivji, 2007). Partnership with local organizations is a role often filled by NGOs, which may or may not serve as a collective entity when working in collaboration with communities to meet shared goals. Serving as the medium between the formal and informal sectors, the position, capacities, roles, and regulation of the global networks of NGOs is critical to any discussion of modern global development.

The recent period of intensifying global interconnections and interrelations has resulted in boundaries of global politics and processes that spill into local environments. The separation between the local and the global has become contextually irrelevant as global systems have become increasingly integrated, interconnected, and complex (Leaper, 2011; Sachs, 2015a; Verma, 2018). With this interconnection is the opportunity for interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration to exchange new ideas and consider other paths of development to address our

shared, complex problems. The widening gap between people and the recognition of the limits of production and consumption has shifted the focus to practical actions and collective social goals. Frank (1966, p. 17) identifies that classical economic theory recognizes that the “determinant factors in economic development [are] really social”. Engagement practices and call for participatory processes bring forward alternative paths to development, approaches encapsulated in ‘localized’ and ‘Indigenous’ knowledge. Community-based and action research methods support researchers to deepen understanding and engagement among people to facilitate mutual understanding and coordinated efforts (Israel et al., 2005; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008). While academics and policymakers are seeking ways to provide forums for public discourses, an increasingly educated, engaged, and entitled population is demanding to speak and be heard. The survival of humanity and the conditions of the environment has become central to the discussions of global development.

## **2.2 Social Development**

Human beings are social species, bound together for survival. It is part of our unique evolutionary adaptive skills to problem solve and act together to ensure the security and continuation of our species. Social connection is the anchor that secures the interests and wellbeing of individuals together, while the inverse, social exclusion, is damaging and increases a likelihood of morbidities and premature mortality (Adger, 2003). Jeffery Sachs (2015a), a leading thinker of the SDGs, argues that social development is at the root of both the problem and the solution for sustainability of the planet and its occupants (human, animal, and plant). The capacity of the social sphere is critical, yet the social dimension of the development agenda has been long neglected (Sachs, 2012). Economic development and securing the means to care for oneself and others are foundational as we are systemically and globally interconnected and responsible for overall wellbeing. As such, without robust, healthy, and productive social system, the entire structure that supports humanity is weakened and destined to disease, discontent, and disparity. The crucial shift away from the focus on economic development as the primary objective of globalization toward the development of the social sphere and the connections among people recognizes and confirms that human wellbeing and survival extends beyond economic factors. Mobilizing the social world is vital to realizing innovative and alternative pathways for sustainable development. Problem-solving and collaborative efforts to shift practices, cultures, institutions, and outcomes depend on the relationships among people,

how individuals feel connected to each other, and can contribute to the world around them.

Social development refers to the social, organizational, and emotional skills that develop throughout the lifecycle, with early childhood and adolescence as the most critical (WHO, 2017). The development of the social sphere relies on investment to improve the capacity of individuals, such as through education, skill training, housing, safety, health, and social protection. Social development is primarily about ensuring that the rights and wellbeing of people are prioritized and, in turn, shape structural forces that develop social agency, human rights, and wellbeing. The Indices of Social Development (World Bank, 2018) measure informal social institutions and formal supports over time and compares across countries. These indices include 1) gender equity; 2) access to basic needs; 3) interpersonal safety and trust; 4) intergroup cohesion and shared goals; and 5) participation and engagement in civil society. Social development further shapes social institutions, such as norms, customs, conventions, ethics, expectations, and agency, which govern social relations and determine acceptable practices and behaviours. The fabric of social institutions determines the levels of trust, cooperation, participation, solidarity, and resilience of the social sphere, and is a means of empowerment for people to direct their futures (Cannon, Twigg, & Rowell, 2009; Deacon, 2016; Foa, 2015; Luhmann, 1995).

The World Bank (2005) describes four related but distinct terms and successive stages in social development, 1) survival, 2) growth, 3) development, and 4) evolution: 1) survival maintains a sustenance level lifestyle without qualitative changes to living standards; growth is a horizontal expansion characterized by a quantitative increase in measurement. At the growth stage, aspiration and energy drive the motivation to expand, along with the awareness to shape the direction of growth; development is the vertical shift that causes qualitative changes and an outer realization of inner potential. The degree, desire, efficiency, capacity, creativity, and productivity determine the pace and extent of the development stage; finally, evolution is a broad expansion that results in transformation and social change. Within social development, social connection and collective capacity act synergistically to shape the potentials and outcomes for a group (Moulaert & Ailenei, 2005; Putnam, 2000).

Woolcock and Narayan (2000) discuss social capital as made up of “the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively” (p. 226), while Bebbington (1999) describes social connection as “crucial to enhance personal potential and reduce risks for individuals by

reducing stress and supporting adaptive change” (p. 2021). The capacity to collaborate is significantly and dramatically improved with communication, commonality, and face-to-face connections among group members (Ledyard, 1995; Ostrom, 2014). Ostrom (1990) argues that the success of collective action largely depends on the ability of individuals to identify with one another. However, the capacity to collaborate is not just a matter of group shared interests, values, or goals, but also requires a common understanding of their goals (Gauri, Woolcock & Desai, 2012). To successfully develop community and collectivity, an understanding of common needs and shared challenges, along with capacities to identify objectives and reach goals among group members, is required. As such, participation mechanisms are essential to equitable and sustainable development in terms of strengthening capacities, mobilizing resources, and reframing policy debates on development priorities and pathways (ICRW, 2011; United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), 2014).

Collectivity emerges when actors have a common understanding of the nature of the problems and possible solutions they face (Gauri, Woolcock & Desai, 2012). Shared meanings are the threads of social life, as they coordinate social action, regulate social relations, dictate group governance, and involve processes of economics and reciprocity. A lack of understanding or social connection creates ‘societal fragility’ where perspectives and priorities are qualitatively different among members of the same group (Gauri, Woolcock & Desai, 2012). Chabay (2015) notes a critical connection between social bonds and successful collective action, whereby societies with low levels of shared understandings and connectedness are more likely to suffer from pervasive collective action failures while undermining the capacity of the group to respond to shocks and stresses or engage in opportunities and innovations. Taylor (1985) argues that social and group outcomes are not a result of individual action, but rather, essentially social relations of mutual action operating through formal and informal avenues. As such, shared meanings, understandings, and ideals cannot be generated or adapted without full consideration or in reference to social and historical production (Chabay 2015).

To realize the level of transformative change required to adjust to sustainable choices and inclusive practices, individual agency, shared understandings, and collective action will need strengthening and affirming. Polanyi (1944) argues that:

Liberal markets and demands are simply unsustainable, and people will inevitably mobilize to protect themselves from the defaults and limitations of the system. The key step is to overturn the belief that the social world is subordinate to the economic market.

(p. 283)

Responding to a “condition of necessity” (Defourny & Develtere, 1999, p. 23), the social economy recognizes the importance of collective action and is based on the principles of solidarity and reciprocal relations. The social economy encompasses mutual support companies, cooperatives, and associations, with characteristic features including redistribution of income and wealth, governance, solidarity, reciprocal relations, and satisfaction of collective needs. The social economy clearly works to strengthen the cooperation and solidarity among people, mainly on a voluntary or reciprocal basis (Chaves & Manzon, 2012; Moulaert & Ailenei, 2005). The early goal of the social economy was the collective well-being established through social bonds within communities (James, 1987). Rooted within the social economy, the “third path” to development offers alternative models of social solidarity and mechanisms of connection in response to neo-liberal policies and capitalist individualism (Defourny & Develtere, 1999, p. 3). Defourny and Develtere (1999) argue that, particularly in traditional societies and resource-restricted contexts, inclusiveness and solidarity underpin the importance of reciprocal relations, where the sense of belonging to the group harnesses the joint agency to collectively cope with vulnerability and risk. Bebbington (1999) further argues that to enhance security and reduce risk for a community, the strengthening of the social economy is key in any development strategy. Nembhard (2004) emphasizes that social enterprises born from the pressure of significant unmet needs and acute problems require empowerment within and solidarity among the group.

The social economy captures and sustains a large share of individuals and communities that occupy the massive non-formal sector. The informal sector is “a basic component -- the base, if you will -- of the total economy” (Chaves & Monzon, 2012, p. 18). This recognition is that the unregulated activities and exchanges within the informal economy are not short-term nor marginally significant, but rather are growing and permanent, even a universal feature of the current socio-economic system. For instance, between 70%-89% of individuals in sub-Saharan Africa are dependent on the informal economy for their livelihood (with over 90% of these falling within the agriculture sector) representing the largest source of employment for women (90%) and men (83%) in Tanzania (ILO, 2018). This reality leads to questions about how this collective energy can be harnessed and organized to benefit the lives of those who participate. Moreover, improving links between ‘formal and informal sectors’ may advance the prospects of emerging partnerships for development. The operation of the informal sector, including access



to economic resources and social and political networks, has largely been facilitated and managed through NGOs and other community-based organizations. In many contexts, these organizations serve as promising institutional arrangements for collective action and are often regarded as more credible, trustworthy, supportive, and accessible than formal sectors (Bebbington et al., 2008). The mere reach of the informal sector makes unlocking the social potential available, and, within it, worthy of focused attention and further development.

Social development is necessary for sustainable development. The option of ‘self-help’ and the “voluntary union of peers formed for mutual assistance” (Nayer et al., 2004, p. 27) with mutual aid is the oldest system used by human beings to improve their situation (Kroptotkin, 2009). Julius Nyerere (1974 as cited in Cornelli, 2012, p. 138) insisted that “failure to cooperate is a mark of bestiality; it is not a characteristic of humanity”. Nembhard (2014) argues that prioritizing social development and building social capacity reduces the sense of insecurity and feelings of powerlessness among people. From the place of mutual trust and understanding, social processes can transform beliefs and behaviours to drive and direct change in economic, political, cultural, and environmental spheres. Social development also provides an opportunity to develop and support the social economy and the informal sector towards collective action. Furthermore, social development is a pathway that can enable transformative change in the way society operates, prioritizes, and value. It underpins the means to change patterns of production, consumption, and distribution worldwide. Sen (2013, p. 10) suggests that the discourse about the social sphere requires a shift to move beyond either ‘consumers’ or those ‘in need’ and rather be referred to as “agents of change who can -- given the opportunity -- think, assess, evaluate, resolve, inspire, agitate, and through these means, reshape the world.” Securing investment for social development, supporting the development of the informal sector, and then realizing the potential of collective action is integral to the sustainability solution.

### **2.3 Gender Development**

Gender is critical to all areas of economic, social, cultural, personal, and political life. The challenge of exclusionary policies and uniform ‘development’ efforts can be most starkly seen in terms of gender relations. Social structures, including legal rules, norms of behaviour, hierarchies, social relations, economic value, and access to services and resources, shape and maintain gender relations. As a result of such social forces, gender inherently shapes the choices individuals make and determines the structures that “fix the space of feasible action that persons

might take” (Kevane, 2014, p. 57). Early development approaches of the 1960s that engaged women did not challenge such social structures nor allow space for alternative approaches (Edelman & Haugerud, 2005). The era of ‘Women in Development’ (WID) orientation to programs and policies reflected revolutionary changes with Western gender relations (Razavi & Miller, 1995). Specifically, global initiatives that promote ‘gender equality’ and address ‘male bias’ primarily involved efforts to incorporate women in the economic sphere, and, less so, in acknowledging the value of women’s social contributions (Boserup, 1970). Overall, the history and concepts of international development have informed the establishment of institutions and regulations to facilitate economic exchange, and specifically the privatization of goods and resources. For decades, development approaches have perpetuated an agenda based on capitalist advancement and formal market systems. The social sphere and informal sector -- the sphere in which women dominate -- have been largely ignored and grossly devalued. The relationship between poverty and gender is an indicator of the priorities and impacts of globalized efforts. In short, overall development investment and attention have clearly had differential economic and political effects and benefits on different socio-economic groups. For women in the ‘developing’ world, inadequate progress in reducing maternal deaths, lack of social and legal protections, inequitable access to economic advancement and political position maintain positions of marginality (Moser, 1989; Odora, 1993; Patton, et al., 2009; Say, et al., 2014; UN, 2015c).

Coinciding with the UN ‘women’s decade’ of development (1975-1984) was the evolution of ‘Women and Development’ (WAD) theories which highlighted limitations of the pre-cursor WID approach. It argued that this approach is not constructed with their needs in mind (Kevane, 2014; Razavi & Miller, 1995). WAD approaches directly address issues of participation and governance while responding to practical needs. Women are understood as different and separate from men, and the development agenda and strategic implementation strategies must distinctly target women. Seen most clearly through various microloan initiatives, women began to find and create avenues for economic opportunities and supportive programming for themselves and families (Kalpana, 2011; Visvanathan & Yoder, 2011). During this phase of development, more substantial and deeper issues emerged, such as practical limitations faced by women, lack of legal rights and protection, and difficulties of men and women working together as equals -- a consequence of cultural, traditional, political, historical,

and geopolitical factors. Furthermore, ‘structural adjustment’ policies emphasized the role of women in advancing the capitalist agenda in an era which diverted funding for development programs, consequently reducing internal growth and national support for alternative development models. Although women possess a unique perspective and position to that of men, WAD development approaches avert the direct challenges of gender relations and equality. Individual women made personal gains within existing structures, but without structural adjustments or realignments to incorporate alternative worldviews or globalizing capitalist trends.

Theoretical positioning of Gender and Development (GAD) and gender mainstreaming emerged in the 1990s and helped to guide development strategies to include gender equity and women’s rights as a foundational underpinning (Moser, 1993; Rai, 2011). GAD recognized that women are deeply affected by patriarchal power and discrimination across global, local, and familial levels. The social construction of gender with women as subordinate and inferior to men is targeted and challenged. Taking a broader perspective of gender relations and development, GAD equally situates both men and women as decision-makers for the benefit of all. Gender mainstreaming as a strategy, with gender equality as the goal, ensures gender considerations are acknowledged, embedded, and central to all discussions (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017). A gender-based analysis captures the different experiences, priorities, as well as ideological perspectives that devalue women and maintain inequitable power between genders. Needs based on gender bring to light system-based discrimination to ensure fair results regardless of gender or life stage. Overall, a gender-based analysis provides an understanding of how gender impacts capacity and access, while guided by the objectives that development approaches do not perpetuate gendered inequalities but do build a sense of entitlement for equal treatment and human rights (Kevane, 2014).

Gender mainstreaming and activities aimed at transformative change (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017) are criticized for serving foreign ideals and fulfilling tied or conditional funding mandates (Wendoh & Wallace, 2007). Sen and Grown (2013) argue that ‘gender equity’ is a culturally rooted idea that means different things with different impacts on different groups and cannot be decided by external forces determining what changes are needed or what roles are defined. Approaches that minimize the cultural context or ignore the cultural dimension of gender is unlikely to be transformative at any significant level. It is clear that

uniform and unidirectional assumptions of gender roles, in fact, devalue local voices and alternative development goals (Rai, 2011). Porter and Sweetman (2007) support a counterargument which suggests that gender mainstreaming intrinsically involves the contextual and local understanding of gender relations from all levels, while providing a critical role for participatory methods. The intersectional analytical lens brought to gender mainstreaming has advanced this discussion through consideration of a multitude of intersections of identity and recognizing how disadvantages overlap (Aylward, 2010; Crenshaw, 1989; UN, 2010). An intersectional approach to gender analysis allows for the examination of differences between and among women, with the understanding that oppression and discrimination occurs at various levels and intensity.

Intersectionality rejects the universalization of experiences among women and instead insists on the discussion of how factors, such as race or class, play a significant role in shaping lived realities (Hancock, 2007). With this lens, individuals and groups of women are seen as contextually unique, with specific and varied needs. Intersectionality also looks to how a group responds to and resists forces impacting their lives, including their own belief systems of power and privilege. Intersectionality facilitates the consideration of the local context, such as systems and institutions that exclude groups or create vulnerabilities while acknowledging the strengths and capacities available in other aspects of their lives (Morris & Bunjun, 2006). The intersectional realities of people also allow for commonalities and differences across and beyond collective groups to emerge, identifying and recognizing the multilayered facets of our lives and shared points of interest.

Although post-structural theorists argue that there is nothing essential about being a woman (Butler, 1990), standpoint and critical theorists insist on the necessity of maintaining the concept of gender (Harding, 2004; Hill Collins, 2000). Recognizing that lived experience is informed by interlocking relations of power (Brah & Phoenix, 2004), variations within and between groups result in substantively distinct experiences from different cultural and historical considerations. Standpoint creates a space for how everyday life is perceived and socially constructed and reconstructed. Personal struggles and experiences provide the ground and expertise earned through these experiences. Our experiences begin with our socio-historic positioning. Particularly when examining and working within a culture or environment that is not your own, and in struggles that do not impact you directly, standpoint theories allow for the

investigation of similarities and differences among people and bring the discussion back to one's standpoint (Harding, 2004). In her scholarly development, Hill Collins (2000, p. 45) questions how she can speak for a large and complex group, such as African American women, to which she responds, "that I cannot and should not because each of us must learn to speak for herself." From this feminist perspective, empowerment occurs when consciousness shifts and understanding of everyday life changes. Empowerment expands as consciousness and awareness of the limitation of freedom reveal themselves. Such knowledge gains power when experiences become a collective act of addressing shared problems through a collective solution. Feminist critical theory supports this work in its commitment to justice, for women as a collective group, and others marginalized and excluded by an inequitable socio-economic system.

Supporting local women to reduce gender discrimination and harassment, while providing opportunity and advancement, Mohanty (2006) writes of a 'feminist solidarity' as a transnational approach for transforming gender relations. By sharing ideas and beliefs, norms, and attitudes, the qualitative day-to-day experiences, people can be better understood in terms of how "multiple forces work together to reinforce conditions of inequality and social exclusion" (CRIAW, 2006, p. 5). Hobbs and Rice (2013) outline how transnational approaches are critical to the movement of capital, labour, information, and culture, which draws out truths of historical colonialization and the result of current global inequalities. Also, transnational work enables solidarity among women and other social groups worldwide, bound by a common goal or vision. Within this political and intellectual movement, local women and women-led organizations are acknowledged as critical to international development efforts and are positioned to lead the development agenda. Moreover, such movement toward gender-balanced, democratically organized social supports rebuild confidence in the principles of pooling, sharing, and collective action (Benford & Snow, 2000; Elson, 1995).

Ensuring and securing positions for women to direct development efforts is long-awaited. Men and women make different choices, in part, because of differentially available opportunities. Women not only prevail in the informal and social economies, but are also an essential source for socialization, social development, and change (Butler, 1990; Hobbs & Rice, 2013; Harper, et al., 2018; Kalu, 1996). Empowered women represent a massive force positioned to question and challenge the inequitable status quo of prevailing social, economic,

and political structures that govern global policy agendas. At the same time, women can identify local priorities, guide political directions, and lead practical changes. Transforming existing relationships between genders in a new way of relating provides a pass through to an era of collaboration. Challenging relations of power and agency through the widespread use of engagement and participatory practices can serve to disrupt traditional structures and even challenge core belief systems. Such a transformation for equitable gender relations involves influence over resources (human, physical, intellectual), ideologies (beliefs, attitudes, values), and the institutions that support and maintain power relations. The first step is to understand local, informal, qualitative experiences of globalization and the economic, social, and cultural impacts on local women (Porter & Sweetman, 2007). The goal to “reduce global poverty in all of its forms” (UN, 2018, p. ii) is, in turn, a goal to expand the range of possibilities and effective choices available to individuals, regardless of gender. Addressing equitable gender development profoundly influences the loop between individual agency and the capacity to operate and dictate structural forces which leads to an informative and transformative global development agenda to respond to local needs.

## **2.4 Education and Training**

Education, both formal and informal, is a critical vector for social development and a powerful way to shift and sustain new ideas and practices. Education transmits collective knowledge and shared constructs of what is real and possible. As a cumulative, dynamic, and continuous process, knowledge production is constructed and transmitted through generations. Knowledge and innovation support society to overcome limitations while raising the level of awareness, expectation, and aspiration for future generations. Education, training, and knowledge sharing are critical to sustainable development and required not only in forms of formal training and technical skill development, but also as social skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, negotiating, critical interpersonal skills to facilitate participation, partnership, engagement, and collaboration. These are crucial drivers of *Agenda 2030* and foundational to social development (UN, 2014). Informal and localized contexts, in particular, provide an intergenerational learning environment to increase cognitive capacities, connections, aspirations, imaginations, and opportunities outside the formal system. Reviving the capacity and significance of informal local systems can influence and invest in the revival of local knowledge, overcome layers of “cognitive imperialism” (Battiste, 2013), and, in turn, avert

passive acceptance and dependency on external processes of the formal market economy.

Throughout developing regions, formal education is promoted as the engine of growth and a determinate of ‘progress’, essential to a “child’s passport out of poverty” (Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011, p. 627). As a highly prized tool in the eradication of poverty and achieving higher living standards, the importance of formal education impressed upon the developing world cannot be overemphasized. Adopted as a “master narrative that is sought by every individual who desires ‘a good life’” (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011, p. 6), education also delivers a hidden curriculum that provides the “knowledge and information which in turn brings about desirable changes in the way you think, feel and act” (Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011, p. 627). Throughout much of the developing world, class sizes are often large, fees are high, rules are exclusionary, and the formal education system essentially equips students with only basic skills in science, math, geography, history, and an elementary knowledge of the English language (Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011; Wandela, 2014). English skills are essential in the formal system as the dominant working language, although often not used in the daily lives of many worldwide (Meyer, 2001).

Although participation in the formal education system is a hallmark of success and critical for upward advancement, participation rates remain low in many developing countries (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011; Ndoeye, 1997; World Bank, 2018). Public financing of the education sector continues to dwindle, and private fees are rising beyond the reach of many, while migration and attrition of skilled personnel and teachers contribute to understaffing and incompetency (Maurial, 1999). Shizha and Kariwo (2011, p.13) describe a situation where poverty is “acute and widespread, leading to many parents finding it difficult to afford tuition fees for their children”, excluding them even further. Access to education is directly related to the access and command over resources, and the ability to generate income and an adequate standard of life. However, education fees for girls are often sacrificed in resource strained environments because of cultural attitudes that girls are bound to marriage, household tasks, and are primarily for baby-making (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011; Harper et al., 2018). Yet, education is a single factor that dramatically determines a women’s ability to make critical life course decisions and determines the ability of a woman to participate in social processes with active agency and influence (Harper et al., 2018; Kuh et al., 2003; Mishra et al., 2010; UN, 2018b).

Education, training, and knowledge create economic opportunities. Securing the economic means for survival increases the possibility for women and girls for autonomous

decisions and empowerment to seek health-promoting behaviours and positive relationships. In an environment of growing responsibility and obligation for women to provide for household needs and demands, women's capacity to self-represent and negotiate social expectations and roles is fundamental (Chant, 2011). Moreover, educational background influences fertility rates and is central to transforming power and gender relations (Barton & Walter, 2013). Given the barriers that girls in development experience in the formal education systems, educational opportunities that nurture diverse competencies and develop other ways of knowing and being, including informal knowledge and skill-building, are paramount for social and sustainable development. Education, informal and formal, provides the means for economic and social participation, and is part of the structural dynamics that normalize the full participation and social inclusion of women. Education, economic participation and social inclusion are interwoven and are critical determinants of wellbeing in lifecycle development, especially for adolescent girls.

## **2.5 Sustainable Development**

The direction of global policy, funding, and development programming post-2015 have expanded, framed as the 'Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs). In the advanced stages of capitalism as a globalized system, the world is divided by great wealth and crippling poverty, fragile political systems, and unprecedented pressure on the ecosystem. The 2012 UN Rio20+ Conference yielded an agreement among member nations on the 17 UN SDGs [Appendix A], and once again, set the agenda to determine global development goals, directions, and resources. Sustainable development is a broad enough concept that incorporates the multi-layers of meaning intrinsic in its terms 'sustainable' and 'development'. Essentially, 'development' refers to change, towards something more significant than its previous state of being, and 'sustainable', for longevity of the change. 'Sustainable Development', as a concept and term in international development originates from the Brundtland Commission report (1987) where it was defined as "meet[ing] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (p. 15). The SDG framework aims to articulate goals to coordinate efforts and mobilize networks. Although the global goals are lofty, the attempt is to readily relate to identified local goals and create a pathway with achievable targets to 'back-cast' or reverse engineer a response to a local goal/concern, driven by local options and solutions (Sachs, 2016). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



(UNESCO, 2017) discuss the importance of the SDGs to grapple with the complexity of economic, political, ecological, and social factors in identifying and achieving practical actions to secure the sustainability of an overcrowded, interconnected global world. Sachs (2015) presents the SDG framework as relying on an ethical and moral imperative for human rights and sustainable practices with a commitment to international cooperation and local engagement.

Broad and far-reaching, the SDGs have expanded the development agenda whereby ‘developed’ and ‘undeveloped’ countries alike are rightfully tasked with measures to achieve sustainability. The cooperative and collaborative pursuit of the SDGs has expanded global goals to include: 1) economic growth; 2) good governance; 3) environmental sustainability; and 4) social inclusion (Sachs, 2015a). These four dimensions to the human sustainability puzzle are complex and interrelated. The SDGs formally recognize that directives and objectives that privilege economic advancement, for instance, cannot be at the expense of social conditions, environmental impact, or political security. The combination of reasonable economic wealth, meeting basic needs, encouraging social inclusion and connection while protecting environmental limits is the holistic objective of the SDGs (Sachs, 2015a). With communities fragmenting, public trust diminishing, and a social spirit disappearing, our collective goal is to understand the interlinkages within the four dimensions of sustainable development. My specific purpose in this work is to understand the role of social inclusion and the need for social development to support the SDGs at the local and global levels. Part of this mission is to consider alternative perspectives and recognize the opportunities for cooperation and collective action in a global pursuit of sustainable development across ‘worlds’.

Social inclusion refers to the equitable access to rights, resources, and opportunities that protect and enhance health and wellbeing (Wang & Nantulya, 2008). As a critical component of sustainable development, social inclusion requires overcoming cultural and political barriers to participation (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), 2014). Social exclusion, on the other hand, is a weakening or lack of essential connections and trust needed to ensure that rights are recognized and barriers are removed (Atkinson, 2009). The degree of social inclusion/exclusion is a function of multifaceted and multidimensional forces. However, the consequences of social exclusion are experienced through marginalization, low self-esteem, limited economic opportunities and resource access, risk of violence, reduced autonomy, and a weakened support system (Hayes, Gray & Edwards, 2008). Moreover, social

exclusion can reinforce and deepen barriers whereby once an individual becomes excluded from the formal system, the means required to re-enter can become insurmountable (Foa, 2015). This exclusion from the formal market system can lead to a ‘poverty trap’ in a situation entrapping those lacking skills and resources. The SDG framework for social inclusion examines the nature of inequality and social exclusion, and the underlying values that motivate social integration and connectedness. As social beings, social inclusion is necessary for survival for humans. As SDGs are planned and strategies implemented, participant engagement is vital to ensure that local and global efforts are aimed towards desired futures (Petrucka et al., 2015). Efforts and methods are required to bring people together and elicit understandings of the shared challenges and available capacity of local and global solutions to address conditions facing communities and social networks worldwide.

Social connections are crucial to enhance personal security and reduce risks for individuals, while simultaneously mitigating stress and supporting adaptive change (Bebbington, 1999). Ostrom (1990) and Evans & Nambiar (2013) argue that harnessing the success of collective action largely depends on the ability of individuals to identify with one another. Inclusion and community collectivity rely on an understanding of everyday needs and shared challenges, along with the capacity to identify objectives and reach goals. In this way, UNRISD (2016, p.2) argues that “participation mechanisms to engage and create collective groups are essential to equitable and sustainable development, strengthening capacities, mobilizing resources, and reframing policy debates on development priorities and pathways”. Creating avenues for social inclusion, collaborative partnerships, interpersonal connectivity, and the pooling of scarce resources are recognized as necessary to achieve the objectives of sustainable development (Sachs, 2015b). Rebuilding confidence in principles of pooling, sharing, and working together (Putnam, 2000) and creating partnerships that directly involve communities (Ng et al., 2013) provides an opportunity for innovation in financing, building up informal sectors, strengthening individual agency, and providing support structures for institutional and organizational change (Lawrence et al., 2009).

Global partnerships are the foundation of the SDGs, yet initiatives are often not led by the lived experiences of those who face significant barriers to the access of goods and services; rather, often they are referred to as the ‘target’ population of development objectives. The local orientation, personal perspectives, and direct participation of impacted populations are widely

underrepresented in development literature. The underrepresentation of the full spectrum of the social sphere in initiatives creates a gap in the practicality and sustainability of funded implementation initiatives. Women's representation, for example, has a powerful effect on shifting ideas, norms, social and cultural change, yet women are often underrepresented and even unheard in decision-making arenas (Rai, 2011; Timmermann & Kruesmann, 2009). A new era of sustainable development is an opportunity to challenge more than 50 years of the global development agenda with funding for practical approaches to community-identified problems, shaped and informed by communities and individuals. Demonstrating how collective efforts and coherent actions of the social sphere can shift practices, cultures, institutions towards sustainable outcomes is a worthwhile endeavor.

## **2.6 Lifecycle Development**

A lifecycle approach to development is an interdisciplinary, multisectoral, and holistic framework that considers sustainable development through the entire lifecycle of an individual, from conception to old age, including social, economic, individual, and environmental considerations (Sachs, 2015a; UN, 2018; Verna & Peterson, 2018; WHO, 2012). Productivity and well-being in the lifecycle are understood to depend on the choices and circumstances at the earliest stages of life and inter-generationally (Boyd & Bee, 2017). During the rise of capitalism in rapidly industrializing European countries, the lifecycle framework and measurable outcomes began to demonstrate that childhood deprivation had severe long-term health consequences (Elder, 1998; Pratt & Frost, 2017). The integrated approach of lifecycle development recognizes the cumulative risks along the life course and the understanding that the number, intensity, and duration of damaging event exposures ultimately affects the likelihood of developing health conditions in the future (Kuruvilla et al., 2018). Understanding the complex and intersecting roles and risks of genetics, biology, behaviour, and the environment, lifecycle research and practices are increasingly multisectoral and interdisciplinary (Mishra et al., 2010) with contributions from the biomedical sciences, nursing, epidemiology, history, and sociology (Pratt & Frost, 2017). Approaches to lifecycle development involve integrated strategies to optimize: i) functional ability: individual, social, temporal, and environmental factors; and, ii) intrinsic capacity: the biologically determined physical and mental capacities of the individual (Kuruvilla et al., 2018).

In a review of lifecycle approaches, Pratt & Frost (2017) found that studies of lifecycle

epidemiology were most pronounced in aging populations of high-income countries and contexts with non-communicable diseases. Despite its relevance and applicability, few interdisciplinary and intersectional lifecycle approaches are found in middle-low income countries and even fewer are directed towards adolescent populations. Further barriers to the broader implementation of lifecycle development include the lack of shared understanding and replicable measurements of how individual abilities and capacities shape multiple factors, such as the complexity of human agency, constraints of structures and institutions, and how resilience accumulates across life stages and generations (Kuruvilla et al., 2018; UN, 2015b; WHO, 2017). A gap in lifecycle development studies is qualitative findings that provide insight into context-specific situations that are tangible but are otherwise overlooked or poorly understood (Pratt & Frost, 2017; WHO, 2012).

Sensitivity to stress and biophysical pathways in the body plays a crucial role throughout gestation, neonatal, and childhood development, and can mean a lifetime of physical and mental difficulties for an individual (Bartley et al., 1997; WHO, 2015b). Substantial and targeted investment at critical points along the life course, particularly in the early years, cannot be replaced by investment later in life. However, lifecycle development is also a lifecycle opportunity. Next to early childhood, the second period of rapid growth and window of opportunity is adolescence (Elder, 1998; Viner et al., 2015). In this stage, social and contextual causes, such as beliefs, norms, and social support networks, make a difference for successful and positive outcomes for a young adult on the path towards adulthood and old age.

This stage is especially critical for adolescent girls, particularly if an adolescent girl becomes a mother and/or caregiver for young children before she is economically and emotionally prepared. Working to delay or prevent early pregnancy in adolescent girls is vital for lifecycle epidemiology, as the face of a girl turns into a woman, then into a mother, and the cycle of life begins again. Lifecycle development and gender are highly linked, with the age of women at first birth as a critical event (Elder, 1994). Social investment in the social determinants of health, such as education, skills, housing, health, and nutrition during crucial points of the lifecycle recognizes that health outcomes and socioeconomic status are mutually reinforcing (WHO, 2008). Moreover, lifecycle development also recognizes the necessary alignment of critical natural and ecological systems to support human health and other complex problems that will require interdisciplinary and multisectoral responses (Whitmee et al., 2015).

Adolescence is a prime opportunity in lifecycle development, paralleled with considerable risk and evolutionary potential. This period projects the trajectories, turning points, and transitions for adolescents as they enter adulthood (Verma & Peterson, 2018).

## **2.7 Adolescent Health**

Adolescence is a critical and central phase of lifecycle development (Alfven et al., 2019; Kleinert & Horton, 2016). The World Youth Report (UN, 2018b, p.1) reports that there are 1.2 billion people aged 15 to 24 years worldwide, which accounts for 16% of the global population. The physiological, neurological, emotional, social, and behavioural processes of adolescence set the pathway into adulthood and parenthood (Gupta et al., 2014; Patton et al., 2016). Risks and behaviours, such as communicable diseases including HIV, undernutrition, obesity, mental health, and addictions, arise in puberty and often persist into adulthood (Hodes et al., 2018; Patton et al., 2018). Kuruvilla et al. (2018, p. 44) report that 70% of preventable death from non-communicable diseases in adults are linked to risks that emerged during adolescence. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2016, pp. 9-11) reports that according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V, 2016), 50% of mental health issues emerge by age 14, and 75% of disorders are diagnosed by age 24. Risks and results may be difficult to evaluate for adolescents at this stage in development, but consequences may have a lifelong impact. For instance, Lansford and Banati (2018) describe the far-reaching burden of diseases and risks for adolescent girls across physical (i.e., iron deficiency anemia, HIV, infections), mental (i.e., depression, anxiety disorders) and social (i.e., intimate partner violence) domains. Normal adolescent development is paramount for the transition from adolescence to adulthood, while experiences in adolescence shape individual identities and collective realities. Adolescence is a predominant transition period for lifecycle development and significantly shaped through social relations.

Adolescence as an age category, transitional period, and social construct is typically associated with the onset of puberty and ends with transitions into parenthood (Feldman & Elliot, 1990). However, Patton et al. (2016) describe the reality more related to acceptance of adult responsibilities, including employment, coupling, and achieving independence. Ansell (2016) reminds us that ‘adolescence’ is a socially constructed concept that is not consistent worldwide. Expectations, roles, and responsibilities of adolescents -- across gender, class, ethnicity, and religion -- are varied, even within a shared culture. Although adolescence is not a

precise and pre-determined period, Sawyer et al. (2012) suggests that it is a phase of maturation into adulthood that is primarily relational. As a relational phase, adolescence sets a significant stage for emotional and cognitive abilities for collaboration, participation, contribution, and lifelong relationships (Collins, 1984). Moreover, adolescence is the launching point for health trajectories which determine the start to life for the next generation.

Capacities are at their peak during adolescence in terms of physical fitness, bone and skeletal health, neurodevelopment and cognitive abilities, hormonal changes and sexual maturation, and when social and cultural norms and standards begin to entrench (Patton et al., 2016; Sawyer et al., 2012; UN, 2015). Yet, prospects and the outlook for adolescents and youth across the globe have deteriorated in recent years, with high unemployment, eroding social protection, increasing evidence of social exclusion, alienation, conflict, violence, and radicalization among groups (Kleinert & Horton, 2016). Urban migration, heightened risk for mental health problems, substance use, obesity, physical inactivity, changes in family structure, separation from family and community support, and the digital revolution opens adolescents to health risks and risk-taking behaviours, including tobacco, drugs and alcohol use, diminished physical activity, nutritional deficiencies, and exposure to violent behaviours and situations. This lifecycle period is also when the first symptoms of mental disorders often emerge. In situations and conditions where adolescents cannot uphold an ‘expected’ or ‘respectable’ pathway to adulthood, alternative transitional paths may be taken, such as resisting religious standards or moral authority, moving out of the family home, and/or involvement in unregulated activities. Social development is strengthened when family relations are intergenerational and include extended families, beyond nuclear units, to build resilience and mobilize resources to share at times of crisis (UNRISD, 2016; World Bank, 2005). However, altered economic development is evidenced in changing family structures where parental separation is now common, and more so with the global trends toward single-parent households (Patton et al., 2016), and adolescents choosing to live with extended families rather than parents (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDSA), 2011).

Hopkins and Pain (2007) suggest three concepts that focus attention on relationalities in young people’s lives: i) life-course, ii) inter-generationality, and iii) inter-sectionality. The life-course is embedded in experiences and events over time, and the experiences throughout one’s life course influence decisions, attitudes, behaviours, and actions. When experiences compound

and surmount, disadvantage can become increasingly concentrated and entrenched, further impacting those most marginalized and vulnerable to systemic shifts. Inter-generationality refers to familiar patterns and historical backgrounds, which frequently determines health outcomes and social mobility (Marmont & Wilkinson, 2006). Elder (1998) described ‘linked lives’ which identifies interdependence across multiple generations, as well as throughout communities. Families are the primary structure that shapes adolescents, and from which they will transition into their own adult family life. Intergenerational relations include explicit expectations and implicit roles among family members. Birth spacing, gender, customs, capacities, and abilities all serve to shape these roles and responsibilities. The influence of family and history is strongly related to the capacity for health and autonomy. The inter-sectionality of adolescent lives is widely shaped by inter-generational considerations, but also by social institutions and normative behaviours. Shanahan et al. (2016) describe agency and actions as embedded within capacities and constraints of economic, historical, and social circumstances. Inter-sectionality can impact and extend to cumulative disadvantage when the impact of stressors and inequities is cumulative, making lifecycle transitions difficult (Lansford & Banati, 2018).

Adolescent wellbeing rests in the space where adolescents are not merely objects or victims of their environments, and yet are profoundly and deeply shaped by the context in which they are located and socialized. Ansell (2016) argues that research is needed to examine how social structures affect child and adolescent lives. Coming into their own, adolescents develop critical thinking and consciousness, and exercise agency in their own lives. Despite the profound and influential forces of socialization, intellectual development in adolescence is also a fertile time for challenging social norms and practices (Johnson et al. 2009). Encouraging participation and engagement in educational and economic realms of life is essential and empowering. Adolescents are a key ‘target’ population for global development initiatives, yet few studies and programs directly incorporate adolescent participation and perspectives on how to best support their social development (Hodes et al., 2018). Participatory research methods are needed to document and reflect on solutions to identified problems and direct initiatives where adolescents are placed as the primary experts responsible for their behaviours and choices. Opportunities developed through inclusive social networks to build competencies and support positive self-esteem allow an adolescent to learn healthy social behaviour to successfully

prepare for adulthood. By establishing healthy personal and social identities, including the development of skills and capacities, young adolescent girls are better able to assess situations, take calculated risks, and develop decision-making mindsets that will empower them as they move into and through adulthood (Leerlooijer et al., 2014).

Recognizing and articulating the value and importance of girls, women, and mothers during lifecycle development allows for shifts in social and economic norms towards supporting optimal outcomes for adolescent girls, who are considered to be a ‘vulnerable’ and ‘critical’ social group. Investment in capacity building of girls and women has a ripple effect as they are the biological and social caregivers of the children and family. The health of a woman is vital for the wellbeing of her children throughout their lifetime. A woman’s health – her wellbeing and knowledge of how to take care of herself and her family – is critical to the welfare of the next generation and plays a fundamental role in both epigenetics (Gluckman & Hanson, 2006) and intergenerational social mobility (Marmont & Wilkinson, 2006). Maternal age at birth of her first child is a powerful determinant of health and social position, making sexual health a critical consideration for female adolescents. Presently, adolescent girls are the most at risk globally for maternal mortality, infant mortality, and poorer overall health and social outcomes (Vogel et al., 2015; WHO, 2015). With adolescent girls already at an increased risk of pregnancy-related complications, the imperative is for relevant strategies, and appropriate approaches to actualize and activate supportive networks, respectful environments, and opportunities for development.

Sexual health is defined by the World Health Organization (2006):

...a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled. (p.5)

Regardless of the overt social or cultural acceptance of adolescents engaging in sexual behaviours, social and biological changes in sexuality initiate at the adolescent stage. Adolescent development is the foundation in which the relationship, experiences, and expectations surrounding sex, gender, and sexuality become established. The agency of an adolescent girl to make choices and decisions concerning her sexuality is critical at this stage. Unfortunately, sexual rights and autonomy are not fully enjoyed by adolescent girls and young



women worldwide. For instance, the most significant number of new HIV infections globally is among young women, who are three times more likely to contract the infection than men (Sen & Ostlin, 2011; Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), 2016).

Additionally, many of the young girls are not infected by boys their age, but by older men (UNAIDS, 2014). The reasons for this disturbing trend are complicated as they lie at the intersection and interplay of gender and cultural norms, social, economic and political practices, violence, patriarchy, and the (de)valuation of women. This adds a layer of complexity, including poverty, dependence, sexual exploitation, and sexual expression. Sexual activity also places a biased responsibility for children and reproduction on girls and women. The disparity of sexual rights and risk to violence is further exacerbated by denial, norms, behaviours, expectations, and entitlement that require crucial and transformational behavioural changes from men. Because of the complexity and stigma surrounding sexual practices, there lies a great need for development initiatives to directly involve and be guided by young women themselves. A first step is undoubtedly ensuring safe environments that provide supportive, nonjudgmental, and confidential services.

Intrinsic to sexual health is the ability to avoid unwanted births. Women and girls need to be informed of safe, effective, and affordable forms of contraception if they are to have the direction of their fertility patterns and sexual choices. However, the unmet need for modern family planning or contraceptives remains staggering worldwide, particularly for adolescent girls (WHO, 2016). Patton et al. (2016) report high levels of unmet contraceptive needs throughout Africa, particularly among unmarried women aged 15-25, often attributed to resistance from partners, limited knowledge of fertility, cost, shyness, and disapproving attitudes of parents and health care providers. More than any other area of health, the cultural, religious, political, and economic context impact the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents. Norms, social attitudes, lack of information, and provider bias are well-cited barriers for young women to be able to make informed decisions concerning reproduction and sexual health (Afnan-Holmes, et al., 2015; Ali, 2009; Harper et al., 2018). Fertility rates are one of the primary reasons that women get stuck in extreme poverty. The young or uneducated woman is doubly burdened as her fertility increases in a period of decreased understanding of contraceptive methods (traditional and modern) (World Bank, 2012).

The choice to have children, both the desire and the decision, are rooted in social norms

embedded in the cognitive and continual processes of socialization. Socialization determines what is desired and what is expected. Social norms and values create fertility rates and family planning practices that are deeply engendered. Fertility patterns and vulnerabilities that arise for women in the sexual sphere are a source for tremendous social change and an avenue for balancing gender relations. Adolescent girls disproportionately experience barriers in accessing family planning support than older or married women (WHO, 2016). Shifts in attitudes towards women and the value placed around them and their fertility support the social development of women to provide an investment in herself and, eventually, in her family. Attitudes, behaviours, expectations, and aspirations are shaped by both the formal and informal spheres. The access to education and training with the transference of skills and capacities through the social sphere is pivotal for young women to build their self-image and esteem, while being able to negotiate, shape, and direct her future.

## **2.8 Development Context: Tanzania**

The Republic of Tanzania (TZ) currently ranks 154/189 on the Global Development Index (UNDP, 2018). The state of development in TZ reveals consequences of decades of global exclusion and underdevelopment throughout Africa, witnessed through exacerbating chronic poverty, gender inequality, lack of infrastructure, governance deficiencies, global policy failure, and a crisis of public social and health service provisions of unfathomable need/demand. This reality, however, cannot be accepted simply as community or collective failings, but consequences that stem largely from the legacy of colonialism, challenges of independence, the politics of globalization, and the impacts of structural adjustment programs. Although Indigenous worldviews and directives of local traditions are not typically considered, and often even denied, Sheikheldin (2015, p. 82) argues that “the best way to construct an African path to development is to deduce it from the African values that preceded and survived, so-claimed, the colonial era”.

Upon independence in 1961, the president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, implemented the Arusha Declaration, which was the central policy for the ambitious initiative of the Ujamaa (*'familyhood'*) project. The Ujamaa was both an ideological framework and a development resettlement project intended to transform the largely rural population of the country into communal villages where people would live and work together. The policy sought to involve the population in national development, planning and resource production, with its main

objective to address marginality and inequality among the people, ensuring “equal opportunity to all men and women irrespective of race, religion or status” (Nyerere, 1977, as cited in Cornelli, 2012, p. 30). The central premise of the national development approach was an ideology that protected human dignity and equality (*‘usawa’*), and a self-reliant communal share of resources (*‘kujitegemea’*) where individuals care for one another as fellow members of the extended family of humanity. Regarding all of humanity as brethren and essentially cooperative, Nyerere sought to revert the population back to its traditional roots and reject the basis of individualistic advancement of Western imperialism: “We have got rid of the foreign government, but we have not yet rid ourselves of the individualist social attitudes which they represented and taught” (Nyerere, 1967 cited in Nyerere, 1973, p. 341).

The essential tenet of Nyerere’s national policy was founded on a synthesis of traditional African society with Western liberal ideals (Cornelli, 2012). Rooted in cultural traditions of communal ownership, social inclusion, participation and cooperation, Ujamaa was also founded on the three basic assumptions of a liberal philosophy: freedom, equality, and unity (Cornelli, 2012; Hyden, 1980; Ibhawoh & Dibua, 2003; Mohiddin, 1968). According to Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003), Nyerere (1973) argued that the ideal society must always be based on these three essentials if people were to work together cooperatively. Under this model, the wellbeing of the individual is maintained and protected through interdependency and mutuality with others. As such, Cornelli (2012) discusses Nyerere’s position that the welfare of the individual is not of greater value than that of the community, but in fact, a gap between people was an impending imbalance and inherently unstable. Shiviji (1995) illustrates that within traditional views, the individual is located in a web of relations based on ‘duty’, rather than the liberal construction of ‘rights’. Supported by the collective models of production and ownership, society and individuals exist in a sort of interrelation and are reliant on balance for stability. In this way, a ‘moral economy’ (Sayer, 2000) is based on justice and equality of all, and not with the intent to acquire wealth at the expense of another. To support such an economy and interrelationship, work was seen as dignified and an ideal to which people aspire. Those who are lazy are a shame and disgrace.

Presenting this policy as ‘African Socialism’ based on a pre-existing ‘attitude of mind’ (*‘mtazamo’*), Nyerere sought a middle or third way between the two opposing blocs who were competing for “ideological control of Africa” in the “second scramble for Africa” (Nyerere,

1968 as cited in Hyden, 1980 p. 205). He sought not to be aligned, and by default opposed, to either side. However, the Ujamaa policy arrived during a period of political bi-polarization of Western capitalism and Soviet or 'Eastern' socialism. Socialism was the desirable alternative to the exploitive nature of capitalism, as Nyerere (1961, as cited Ibhawoh & Dibua, 2003, p. 62) states: "no underdeveloped country can afford to be anything but socialist" and impressed the need and priority in all policies for self-reliance ( '*kujitegemea* '). Yet, within the Cold War political environment, Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003) point out that Nyerere stressed that self-reliance was not intended as an isolationist policy for his country, but as a middle ground between opposing global forces.

Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003) recount that most Western governments were not sympathetic to Nyerere's ideals. Despite establishing the Non-Aligned Movement, of which Nyerere was one of the founders, the Cold War rift between the US-West and the Soviet-Eastern Bloc caused a ripple effect of ideological alliances and bipolar 'othering' in foreign policies the world over (Hyden, 1980). To this end, Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003) discuss how the three largest British banks adopted a strategy of noncooperation aimed at the banking sector to ensure that the Ujamaa policy failed, and in turn, destroying international confidence in Tanzania's economy. Coulson (1985 as cited in Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003, p. 65) reports that the government of Kenya and Uganda did not adopt similar policies, but rather affirmed their capitalist-oriented economies. Given the state of the country's economy in 1967, adopting policies of nationalization to break the dependency and to 'delink' from neocolonial connections and western capitalist interests was a 'precarious approach' (Dibua, 1998). Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003, p. 69) argue:

[I]n a situation of fragile domestic resource base, an almost stagnant growth rate in domestic production and an international commodity pricing system over which it had no control, it made little sense for a country like Tanzania to abruptly sever crucial links with the Western capitalist economies.

Not sympathetic to the socialist ideology, Yeager (1989 as cited in Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003, pg. 60) describes Nyerere and the ruling elite as "robbing personal freedoms, private incentives, and individual rewards essential for a transition to a modern, prosperous, and democratic society."

Implementing the Ujamaa project was done through local community-based organizations that provided support and guidance. However, the support available was primarily

technical, assisting in the mechanics of setting up and running membership organizations. Similar to ‘capacity building’ initiatives in current development literature and practice, the national Ujamaa project drew involvement and support from invested international agencies, including OXFAM (Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, founded in Britain in 1942), which identified as a proxy to the state (Jennings, 2002). Promises of official assistance, which eventually stopped, resulted in villages becoming over-dependent on government initiatives and incentives which left them extremely vulnerable (Copans, 1991). Creating ‘naturally’ occurring self-contained units of production, consumption, and governance required more direction and resources from the central government than was available (Green, 2010). Although initially voluntary, villagization eventually became compulsory, and, along with the use of force, 90% of the population were living in Ujamaa villages by 1980 (Green, 2010). In 1976, autonomous organizations and cooperatives banned, private property was confiscated, and Tanzania essentially became a centrally controlled socialist state (Ibhawoh & Dibia, 2003).

The “lost 25 years” from 1975 to 1999 was especially severe because of the low levels of income African countries had upon independence (Kevane, 2014). Faced with economic difficulties, Ibhawoh and Dibia (2003) report that by 1977, Tanzania had become indebted to the IMF through economic liberalization and required cuts in government expenditures. These loans weakened Tanzania on the global stage, further challenging its ability to develop its own social, political, economic, and cultural spheres. Pieper, Mkandawire and Hoeven (2016) argue that the lack of investment from the development agenda to encourage long-term growth and development of human and social capital perpetuated a state of dependency and unmet development capacity for the people of Tanzania. After the collapse of Nyerere’s ‘benevolent’ dictatorship and the introduction of the multi-party system, the ‘Ujamaa’ rhetoric was replaced with policies and adopting liberal democracy and international market demands (Shivji, 1995). By the end of the Cold War and the subsequent domination of Western capitalism, the country had transitioned and fully adopted political and economic liberalization policies. International development agencies systematically expanded their presence in the country, and international capital was extended.

Ibhawoh and Dibia (2003, p. 68) describe the ‘*Kulak Ujamaa*’ as “perhaps the single most adverse limitation of the Ujamaa program”. In this sense, peasants with connection to local bureaucrats began to further their own interests and increase their personal wealth (Ibhawoh &

Dibua, 2003). Ergas (1980) identifies that the emergence of bureaucratic peasants as an elite class is “undoubtedly one of the most crucial societal phenomena in the modern history of Africa”, while Ergas (1980) describes how this elite class continues to safeguard Western interests as part of the prevailing dominant class. However, the Ujamaa project was constrained by a number of limitations beyond self-interested attitudes, such as weak social, economic, or political foundations to support the model. Jennings (2002) suggests that the failure of Ujamaa, and perhaps the entire socialist experiment, was related to a policy that was too ambitious and utopian. Green (2010) argues that perhaps if the policies were more moderate in tone and implementation, they would have been more acceptable to the populace, thereby reducing the aspirational gap between widespread expectations and actual performance. Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003) argue that Ujamaa was fraught with the difficulties and limitations faced by many post-colonial states. However, Ujamaa did provide a political stability otherwise unseen in post-colonial Africa. Shivji (1995) argues that this stability emerged because the policy resonated with the popular consciousness and worldview.

Nyerere’s approach to development and nationalism remains contested. Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003) present claims that Nyerere caused devastation in postcolonial Africa, while citing others who claim that he was a humanist who sought practical options and freedom for his people based on self-reliance and non-exploitative development. Either way, for Tanzanians, the “Father of the Nation” (*‘baba wa taifa’*) has been memorialised as “a symbol of humility, integrity, and incorruptibility” in the quest for a unified nation (Fouéré, 2014, p. 2). Declared as a “servant of god” by the Vatican, Nyerere remains the icon of morality against which others are judged (Fouéré, 2014, p.9). While his photograph continues to hang on the walls of public and government buildings, what is useful is the discussion of the influence of Nyerere and the ideological foundation of Ujamaa as a potential development strategy (Ibhawoh & Dibua, 2003). Shivji (1995, p. 17) argues that, while the “African contributions to human emancipation have not been reiterated: instead, they have often been denied”, the legitimacy and lasting legacy of Ujamaa speaks to the worldview of the people and should not to be simply dismissed.

### **2.8.1 Gender Relations**

Lal (2010) describes development politics in Tanzania between 1964 and 1975 as “organized around a version of *Ujamaa* that normalized distinct gender roles and celebrated a generic ideal of the nuclear family” (p.18). Lal (2010) describes the situation:

[I]n theory, ujamaa sought to eliminate material and ideological distinctions, and compress physical distances between Tanzanian citizens through an ambitious program of socialist villagization. (p. 2)

Nyerere saw gender inequality as ‘an impediment to socialist transformation’ and argued that “for full and quick progress, gender equality was a necessity”:

such inequalities were inconsistent with Tanzania’s socialist conception of the equality of all human beings...”, making an appeal that “...if we want our country to make full and quick progress now, it is essential that our women live on terms of full equality with their fellow citizens who are men. (Nyerere, 1968 as cited in Wakota, 2018, p. 134)

However, in practice, roles and experiences for men and women were much different within the Tanzania’s national structure of ‘*familyhood*’ and a national development approach based on ‘tribal socialism’ (Nyerere, 1961).

Lal (2010) describes a social environment before Ujamaa where relationships were fluid, and kinship alliances formed and dissolved in order to achieve self-reliance and security. Marriage was a temporary survival strategy (Wakota, 2018), while multiple marriages applied equally to men and women, with divorce and separation rates reflecting low life expectancy rates (Lal, 2010). However, a very different model of ‘*familyhood*’ was implemented through the national Ujamaa development policy, which “emphasized the nuclear family as a natural and enduring institution” (Lal, 2010, p. 20). As a decentralized rural development project, Lal (2010) argues that Ujamaa emphasized socialist community, rather than biological kinship, with state-directed policies which normalized the monogamous nuclear family structure. The new structure of ‘the nuclear family’ meant moving away from extended families, which was seen as a dissolution or splitting of extended family groups during the stages of Ujamaa, either voluntarily or by force. Needless to say, Lal (2010, p. 18) points out that the “understanding of ‘*familyhood*’ and the larger project of ‘*ujamaa*’ was deeply riddled with internal tensions.

Within this new structure, Lal (2010) discusses men as the breadwinners and militants of the revolution, while women were described as homemakers and maintainers of the nuclear family and community connections. Nyerere acclaims the female role model as a devoted mother to the nation as a whole, as evidenced in the 1972 national development discourse:

The women of Tanzania can do much more by participating in the building of socialism as well as rearing and bringing up a robust intelligent nation. For let it not be forgotten that the women of this country are both nation builders and mothers. As nation builders, they must work shoulder to shoulder with their menfolk in building the new Tanzania to which all of us aspire. As mothers, they must take care of the nation. (Nyerere, 1968 as

cited in Lal, 2010, p. 6).

The Development Plan was “not conceived as a revolutionary means of changing the status of women; instead, it was designed to enable women to play their fullest part as wives and mothers” and therefore, “to improve the family’s general standard of living” (The Nationalist, 1965 cited in Lal, 2010). Jennings (2002) further expands on the Ujamaa period including home economics training and collectively run commercial activities for women, which aligns with present-day development activities aimed at women and girls. Lal (2010) argues that these development practices of Ujamaa reinforced, rather than dissolved gendered distinctions.

Gender continues to be a significant factor for exclusion and rigid role expectations in Tanzania. Gender inequality is perpetuated by a dominant social and cultural ideology, norms, and behaviours that have directly led to the underutilization of human capital, intergenerational poverty, and poor social, economic, and health outcomes for the country (United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2011). The Countdown to 2015 Case Study of Tanzania (WHO, 2015b) indicates a high motivation for action within the country to support women’s rights and secure women’s health. Specifically, the priorities remain to provide family planning needs (particularly for adolescents), and to implement further strategies that reduce gender inequalities that promote empowerment and capacity building (Tanzania Ministry of Health and Social Welfare [MOHSW], 2014).

Women and adolescent girls are maintained to be at the centre of development and equality policies in Tanzania (MOHSW, 2014). Timmermann and Kruesmann (2009) argue that adolescent fertility is a good indicator of gender inequality and female disempowerment. Tanzania has one of the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in the world, where 40% of girls have begun childbearing by age 18 (USAID, 2011), and 60% of all new HIV cases are in this demographic (Mmbaga et al., 2012). Four percent (4%) of women had given birth by age 15 and 56% are mothers by 20 (USAID, 2011). The median age of first intercourse for women is 17, with wealthier women initiating sexual activity two years later than those living in poverty (Tanzania Demographic Household Survey (TDHS), (MOHSW, 2011). In 2011 UNICEF reported that 1 in 6 girls in TZ are married before age 17, and 3.3% of households are headed by adolescent mothers who are left responsible for providing for themselves and the next generation of children (UNICEF, 2011). With an average of 6 children, the earlier a woman begins having children, the higher the rate of maternal and child health risks, population growth,



and impact on broad sustainable development goals. A woman's ability to control her sexuality and fertility is mostly a function of the level of control she has over her life. If a young woman feels or has little control over other aspects of her life, she is unlikely to think or express feelings on family planning or choices on sexuality. With only 29% of sexually active unmarried women reporting the use of contraception in Tanzania (TDHS, 2011), strategies to enable young women to gain agency and power in their own lives are paramount.

Representing almost a quarter of the population (23%), over 9.9 million people in Tanzania are adolescents (USAID, 2011). Tanzania's Poverty Reduction Strategy 2010-2015 is a key national policy strategy directing national efforts towards those adolescents who are surviving on the margins. Girls with no education are clearly the most vulnerable to early pregnancy; where over 50% are pregnant before 19 years old, compared to 25% of those completed primary school, and 5% of girls who completed secondary school (MOHSW, 2014). This massive demographic provides a unique and critical situation that calls for targeted efforts to support the development of the nation, and her adolescent girls. Efforts to address adolescent reproductive health, sexual rights, and gender equality in Tanzania reach into the social and cultural environment that, in turn, frames the life choice for young girls (Azenha et al., 2013; Mmbaga et al., 2012). Friendships, social relations, and connections are critical influences on directions and ideas, including sexual practices and risky behaviours. Strengthening positive and productive social relationships have a ripple effect among adolescents and is worthy of attention. Investment in social development for this growing group of young girls is a wise investment for sustainable development.

### ***2.8.2 African Knowledge System***

Acknowledging the importance of local, traditional, or Indigenous ways of knowing is neither new nor novel (Archibald, 2008). Many scientific and social researchers recognize and promote the important role that local knowledge plays in the implementation and establishment of SDG policies and projects (Priyadarshini & Abhilash, 2019; Sachs, 2015a; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011; UNDP, 2016), while Okeke-Ihejirika (2004, p. 26) argues that "'culturally specific knowledge' is not merely essential but should remain the major defining element of this scholarship". Shizha (2013) describes the features of local African knowledge and Indigenous education centred on: 1) close links with social life (materially and spiritually) and are inherently collective in nature; and 2) connection to the land as necessary for the child and

social group progress and development. However, due to the roots of formal education in colonialism and its practices, the education system has largely divorced itself from these traditional African ways of informal learning (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011).

Localized Indigenous epistemologies and traditional ways of knowing and being were not well regarded by colonialist thinking and are not well integrated by processes of globalization. Shizha & Kariwo (2011, p. 10) posit that the colonial mentality inherently “discounted African Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices” while misperceiving local practices “as invalid and irrelevant to colonial economic interests”. Colonialism excluded African traditions, epistemologies, and ways of knowing, and, as Nwanosike and Onyije (2011, p. 41-42) argued:

assumes the right of one people to impose their will upon another. This must inevitably lead to a situation of dominance and dependency which will systematically subordinate those governed by it to the imported culture in social, economic and political life.

Shizha and Kariwo (2011) posit that the foreign colonial culture had a hegemonic and demonizing effect on Indigenous education systems in Africa, disrupting the values and essential cultural needs of communities. The imposition of a colonial and capitalist worldview is arguably responsible for the deliberate distortion of traditional education and disruption of practices established over hundreds of years (Battiste, 2013; Rodney, 1982; Shizha, 2013).

African writer Ngugi (1981) argues for the need to ‘decolonize the mind’, as the colonial approach to ‘education’ makes local peoples “see their past as a wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves”, and therefore, “not only does colonial education eventually create a sense of wanting to disassociate with native heritage, but it affects the individual and the sense of self-confidence” (as cited in Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011, pp. 42-43). African educationalist, Abdou Moumuni, concluded that the “colonial education corrupted the thinking and sensibilities of the African and filled him with abnormal complexes” (cited in Rodney, 1973, p. 74). This deliberate devaluation of Indigenous and African cultures is purported to lead to the establishment of hierarchical structures and exploitation of local peoples consistent with Western norms and priorities (Seawright, 2014; Shizha, 2013). As cited by Cornelli (2012, p. 69), Nyerere (1977) argued that:

the education system introduced into Tanzania by the colonialists...was based on the assumption of a colonialist and capitalist society. It emphasized and encouraged the individualistic instincts of mankind, instead of his cooperative instincts [and] it led to the possession of individual material wealth being the major criterion of social merit and

worth.

To exacerbate matters, African leaders assumed political power after independence from colonial rulers, but without sufficient economic resources. Feldmann (2016) notes that, while Africans controlled political power, Western countries maintain control over the economic power. As an educational system emerged devoid of African context or the promotion of local resources (Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011), Nyerere viewed the colonial education system as producing people who just consume: “they do not learn as they work, they simply work”; rather, the goal of education was “to foster the social goals of living together and working together for the common good ... and to play a dynamic and constructive part in the development of the society” (Nyerere, 1977, as cited in Cornelli, 2012, p.47).

Others by contrast further suggest that the Western objective of education was to liberate people from traditional cultures and ways of being for higher civilization (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005; Brokensha et al., 1980; Maweu, 2011), aligning with a development model emphasising ‘catching up’ with so-called advanced countries (Rostow, 1990). Shizha and Kariwo (2011) posit that such a development model does not consider the local traditional epistemologies and philosophies which re-conceptualize development in a manner that is more apt to be sustainable for respective communities, regions, or countries. Thus, the education system has not supported independence of the post-colonial states, but rather, has corrupted their thinking and sensibilities about their countries and cultures (Cornelli, 2012; Shizha, 2013). Walter Rodney states in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*:

The educated Africans were the most alienated on the continent ... At each further stage of education, they were battered and succumbed to the white capitalist; and, after being given salaries, they could then afford to sustain a style of life imported from outside ... that further transformed their mentality. (Rodney, 1973, p. 275)

The formalized education system, combined with cultural and social norms, institutional barriers, economic considerations, and public policy, largely determines access to education, while informal knowledge is largely undervalued and the informal sector unregulated. The informal teaching of children, especially related to rites of passage teachings and ceremonies, determines roles within the group and is dependent on gender. Rodney (1973) maintained:

[T]here was no separation of education and productive activity or any division between manual and intellectual education. Altogether, through mainly informal means, pre-colonial, African education matched the realities of pre-colonial African society and produced well-rounded personalities to fit the society... Formal education in pre-colonial

Africa was also directly connected with the purposes of the society, just like informal education. The programmes of teaching were restricted to certain periods in the life of every individual, notably the period of initiation or coming of age [in adolescence]. (p. 141)

Reaching adolescence and the differential treatment of girls and boys when accessing education systems is a critical topic. At this stage of social and personal development, girls are expected to contribute to increased household tasks leading to early school leaving, while boys are directed towards wage-earning, often predicating their continuation of formal education. Household tasks and gender role expectations have a substantial impact on adolescent girls and school enrollment rates. Girls may experience exclusion, social pressure, negative attitudes, discrimination and even violence at school, resulting in an increased risk of girls dropping out of the formal education system (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005; Harper et al., 2018; Spiel et al., 2018). Moreover, the direct costs of school tuition, transportation, and uniforms are often considerably higher for girls than boys. For instance, a Tanzanian household spends as much as 14% more to send a girl to school than a boy (USAID, 2014). After school reforms in 2015, school fees for primary and secondary school in TZ were waived to provide universal access. However, the reduction in school fees has left a gap in school budgets, where families are expected to absorb the costs while the quality of education suffers. Harassment and corporal punishment are routinely practiced and accepted in schools, and mandatory pregnancy tests have frequently contributed to the expelling of girls who become pregnant without concomitant consequences for the male parent. Once removed from the education system, re-entry into school is exceptionally difficult.

Centuries of colonialist efforts have undermined other ways of seeing and being in the world (Wilson, 2011). As Shizha and Kariwo (2011) argue, it has “slowed down the emancipation of former colonies as they become more dependent on the former imperialists’ ill advice on economic policies and programmes for social development” (p. 43). For Africa to benefit from its massive social capacity available among its adolescent population, those leaving or who left school early must have the means to contribute to social and sustainable development. Nwanosike and Onyije (2011) discuss the ubiquitous recognition of education as the gateway for development but insist it must be internally driven and tailored to the local needs and knowledge. Rodney (1973, p. 162) argues that:

education is crucial in any society for the preservation of the lives of its members and

the maintenance of the social structure. Under certain circumstances, education also promotes social change. The greater portion of that education is informal, being acquired by the young from the example and behaviour of elders in the society. Under normal circumstances, education grows out of the environment; the learning process being directly related to the pattern of work in the society.

The potential exists for an increased role and value of informal education to broadly engage youths in social learning that is related to the pattern of work within the society, where “to live is to learn. To learn is to try to live better.” (Nyerere, 1973, p. 141).

## **2.9 What is at Stake?**

The *SDG Agenda 2030* aims to ‘leave no one behind’ in its commitment to reach excluded groups and provide social protection to help people build resilience (UN, 2018a). To support this aim, implemented programs and policies tailored to meet local needs are to be articulated and directed by local people (Bhuyan, 2004; Dunn, et al., 2011; Kar, 1999; Mawere & Awuah-Nyamekye, 2013; Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011; WHO, 2008). Engaged and collaborative partnership models meet the need for Indigenous and local knowledge systems to shape the sustainability discussion, directions, knowledge production, and practical implementation. Partnership models led by solidarity, collectivity, and social inclusion are critical determinants of sustainable development and human survival. Investing in social development and identifying avenues for collective action is critical as an interconnected global system becomes increasingly vulnerable to systemic gaps, environmental shocks, and economic failings. The basis for the analysis is on observations and learnings from the Mama Kwanza capacity building initiative and the experiences of a group of adolescent girls in Tanzania who are no longer enrolled in formal education. Based on the influence of informal networks and the interpersonal, local, and global reach of social development, this work explores the capacity and willingness to harness collective action towards sustainability and equity. Through a reflexive analysis, the study assesses how social development can better support sustainable development in the local/global context.

### **3. Theoretical and Analytical Framework**

*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.*  
*-African proverb*

#### **3.1 The Agency and Structural Dichotomy**

Giddens' (1984) dominant Structuration Theory offers a critically influential perspective on human behaviour based on the interrelationship between governing structures and human agency for action, choice, and change. Structures at all levels are recognized from processes of stratification and global governing institutions, to norms and social relations that guide or constrain individual agency. Giddens (1984) presents individual agency as "one's ability to exercise free will and ability to make decisions" (p. 27). Giddens (1984, 1991) argues the synthesis of structure and agency, or 'structuration', is the influence of individual agency to direct, maintain, and adapt structural forces. Crucial to this position is that social structures are not inherently stable, but rely on the action of individuals to sustain such structures. Moreover, through the process of 'reflexivity', agents become aware enough to question and modify structures, resist, and act outside the constraint structures that they impose (Knafo, 2010). Giddens (1984) argues that individuals are "purposive agents" who consciously and reflexively monitor their own, and others, behaviors: "to be human is to be a purposive agent, who has both reasons for his or her actions and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons" (p. 3). In essence, society is the result of relations of forces between structure and agency as constant interactions in which social relations and social structures are constructed and reproduced (Taylor, 1985).

The concept of reflexivity is foundational to the Structuration Theory as it emphasizes the active role of agents as conscious and not merely subjected to forces that are not evident or understood (Giddens, 1991). Hence, human actors are seen as knowledgeable, with the capacity to know what they do, and why they do it. Giddens (1984) further recognized that agency is not based on individual intentions, but on the ability or inability of an individual to act. Individuals lose the capacity of agency when there is no option to exercise control or transformative choice. The degree of agency individuals experience requires a shift from being unable to verbalize reasoning behind actions to becoming consciously discursive and able to explain decisions in words. Coaching, for instance, can facilitate this practical awareness and further develop consciousness in the agent. Reflexivity also requires the same critical examination of the

researcher to expose underlying conscious patterns and reflections. The ‘reflexive imperative’ (Archer, 2012) requires all people to question and know what they do, and why they do it. This inquiry provides insight into motives, values, attitudes, and aspirations. The multiple levels of lens and awareness brought on by reflexivity extend to the micro-level of individual experience and bias, the meso-level of cultural patterns and social relationship, and the macro-level of international development and financial policies (Suddaby, 2013).

Although a significant contribution to the analysis of the purposeful agent for social change, Giddens’ theory is challenged on his overemphasis on the power of the agent: “we are, not what we are, but what we make ourselves” (Giddens, 1995, p. 75). Individuals confront and are shaped by structural constraints as rules that direct individual action, reproduced through social and normative systems. Post-modern theorists, such as Foucault (1977; 1995), powerfully illustrate how all systems, even patterns of discourse, are structured to oppress the individual. Luhmann (1993; 1995) reveals that individuals are socialized into roles to serve the system, while Thompson (1989) further argues for the objective dimension of society that is autonomous and independent of individual interpretation. Ansell (2016) reminds us that the very interest in ‘agency’ is a Western concept. At the very least, the postulation that individual agents are no longer restricted to ascribed social relations (Giddens, 1995) and have the autonomy to shape one’s life circumstances reflects “post-traditional paradigms and the individual-centric ontology of the Western world” (Oyewumi, 2002, p. 3). Although the development of autonomy is stressed more in some cultures than others, the recognition that young people’s lives are produced and shaped through global processes and social relationships demonstrate the limited power to make choices under structural and cultural conditions imposed upon them.

Gender and development theorists increasingly highlight ‘women’ as no longer ‘passive victims’, but rather as able to make informed decisions and reasonable choices (Lovell, 2000). Women do, in fact, exercise choice and push against the inherently racialized constructs of the ‘developing world’ (Wilson, 2011). However, Kalpana (2011) reminds us that for women, the exercise of agency in some contexts is limited. A fundamental fault of various contemporary versions of the agency/structure debate (Giddens, 1984; Habermas & McCarthy, 1985) is the dualistic ontology that largely removes the social context from the analysis. Social position, interaction, and organization create social change, as King (2012, p.17) puts it:

[S]ociety does not consist of structure and agency but of the social relations between human beings. Life is not the struggle of the individual [agent] against the structure, nor the reproduction of the structure by the agent but an eternal round of interactions through which social relations between humans are made, transformed, and destroyed.

Understanding social position and prevailing vulnerabilities reveals how individuals live and survive in relation to and with each other, as well as how groups can mobilize based on shared and/or leveraged capacities. Maintaining social bonds and connections is crucial, particularly for the most vulnerable in accessing economic resources and political support. This work contributes to the analysis of the intersectional realities and social development among individual agents with shared interests to address collective goals and challenges of sustainability.

### **3.2 Collectivity and the Theory of Collective Action**

In recognizing the critical importance of social inclusion and limitations on individual agency to ensure survival and achieve broader social goals, the discussion around collectives and pursuing mutually beneficial goals becomes necessary and progressive. Durkheim (1976) describes collective social life as organic and sacred, which enables the constant interaction necessary to secure a binding attachment, that establishes collective life with this effect:

brings about a state of effervescence which changes the conditions of psychic activity. Vital energies are over-excited, passions more active, sensations are stronger; [and] there are even some which are produced only at this moment. A man does not recognise himself; he feels himself transformed, and consequently, he transforms the environment which surrounds him. (cited in Metcalfe & Game, 2008, p. 102)

Pierre Bourdieu (1980) lays out the theoretical underpinnings of resolving the dissonance between ‘self’ and the external ‘other’. The concept of ‘social space’ challenges this dualistic relationship and provides space for the ‘intrinsic properties’ of the group to emerge (Bourdieu, 1998). Shared vulnerabilities and realities are crucial to understanding and lie within the context of the social background in which actors can unite and share in decision making. Moreover, this social space houses shared understanding or ‘common knowledge’ that is intrinsically inscribed into people’s sub-conscious awareness and habitual activities and guide social action (Taylor, 1995). As such, contextual accounts by communities and socially meaningful deliberations may be more effective in the pursuit of sustainable change with the opening of such ‘conceptual spaces’ (Gauri, Woolcock & Desai, 2012) which lay the path for innovation and alternative ways of doing. It is increasingly necessary and ethically imperative for strategies in policy and



development to consider what best serves the community, while recognizing how such interventions may further exacerbate struggles and disparities. Such insight is achieved only through direct engagement of the group and those with lived experiences, and Cleaver (1999) argues only through expert research tactics, from participation through knowledge translation, will collaborative thinking be fully explicated.

How do we know what we do not know, as there is much unseen in our world merely and simply through enculturation and socialization? An agent must become conscious; to see the lens before you can see past it (Finlay & Gough, 2003). For Bourdieu (1990), the internalization of social structures occurs as part of the habitus, as “embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history ... that is encoding in the rules and logic of institutions” (pp. 56). The internalization is the unavoidable lens from which actors understand an issue and incorporate their interests within the ‘schemata of interpretation’ (Manning, 1992). People frame their understandings and representations of what the world is like, and why they do what they do, according to what is expected of them and the options they are presented. When learning is integrated, the analyses cannot fully understand without reference to social and historical production. This level of study leads to a localized inquiry into the knowledge of how institutional, cultural, and environmental contexts influence individuals to either pursue or disregard collective action opportunities.

Olson (1965) has clearly articulated the successes and failures of collective action, and claims that “analyzing group behaviour in the same manner as individual behaviour was erroneous, even if all members of the group shared the same interests and all would profit on taking up a collective activity” (as cited in Czech, 2016, p.115). According to Czech (2016), Olson envisions a group as an assembly of rational individuals, not as an entity itself. Based on economic assumptions, Olson’s presents his central argument against collective action was that

unless the number of individuals in a group is quite small, or unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests.  
(Olson, 1965, p. 2)

According to Olson (1965), there are two considerations for successful collective action: 1) size and dynamics of a group; and 2) incentives for cooperation. Olson & Zeckhauser (1966) acknowledged that individual interests usually are best served by individual action but theorized that small groups can realistically organize for collective action when individuals have a

common objective or goal. Small groups are more agile and likely to succeed than large groups, as altruism, ambition, or moral causes are likely motivators for a small group collective action. Moreover, in a small group, the advantages and likelihood of mutual or shared gains can outweigh the necessary sacrifices (Czech, 2016; Olson, 1965).

Olson (1965) spoke to the role of success as an incentive to participate in a collective group to enjoy rewards or outcomes that would not otherwise be available. The group size influences group behaviour, as there is an inverse relationship between group size and perceived individual impacts, such that larger groups result in the individual participant sensing “his [*sic*] own efforts will probably not make much difference to the outcome” (Olson 1971, p. 53). Olson does, however, support and claim that collective action is most achievable by small groups when an “independent source of selected incentives motivates them to organize or act to achieve their objectives” (Olson, 1965, p. 167). However, even in small groups, a degree of organization is required as “unorganized groups with no lobbies nor exerted pressure are among the largest groups in the nation, and they have some of the most vital common interests” (Olson, 1965, p. 165).

As Olson’s position was grounded in economics, Czech (2016) reminds us that the underpinning assumptions emanate from rational maximizing behaviour and therefore have limited generalizability to a theory of collective action. Several scholars have proposed theoretical syntheses of empirical findings regarding factors that affect the likelihood of groups overcoming individual and social dilemmas, thereby contributing to the potential success of collective action. Factors considered include size and heterogeneity; dependence of the group members on each other; scarcity of resources; total mutual benefit; temptation to free-ride; degree of social capital; past experiences; norms of reciprocity; and strong leadership (Adger, 2003; Hardin, 2015; Kuokkanen, 2008; Ostrom, 2007; Triandis, 2018). With these factors in mind, social scientists suggest that people are “characterized by an instinct of self-organization which pushed them into collective action in order to achieve common goals” (Czech, 2016, p. 115). However, similar to Olson’s perspective (1965), Ostrom (1990) argues that “as long as the appropriators stay ‘unorganized’ they cannot achieve a joint return as high as they could have received if they had organized in some way to undertake collective action” (p. 39). There are many examples of successful self-organizational processes which emerge without external control as exemplified in partnerships (i.e., law and private practice firms), cooperatives (i.e.,

Saskatchewan Federated Co-operatives Limited), and profit-sharing arrangements (i.e., WestJet Airlines). These examples reflect that humans can successfully organize themselves for mutual benefit with sufficient internal regulation supported by commonly shared goals and understandings.

Ostrom (1990) argues that alternative approaches from external governance and market regulation toward internal organization for mutual benefit shift the discussion from the ‘tragedy of the commons’ scenario towards an understanding of “self and group regulations through internal relations grounded in communication, trust, and a shared common future” (Ostrom, 1990, p. 6). The capacity to collaborate dramatically improves with the opportunities for communication and face-to-face connections among group members (Ledyard, 1995; Ostrom, 2000). Even conditional cooperators who tend to have a ‘self-serving bias’ and contribute slightly below the average of others’ contributions, engaged in coordinated cooperation when reciprocated (Czech, 2016). Social norms, such as reciprocity, trust, and equality, were initially present in most situations, and even among ‘conditional cooperation’ individuals (Ostrom, 1990). Since preferences change based on experiences, the behaviours of individuals can also change over time. Some behaviours are seen to be reflected in smaller groups, when the welfare of each member noticeably begins to depend on whether the others act in a group-oriented way. Further, the more inter-related success is to the expectations of others, the more critical the nature of relationships, the interdependence of agents central to the exchange, and collective relations become (Adger, 2003). Hence, the likely success of adopting cooperative social norms strongly depends on the capacity to identify with one another which requires future exploration in advancing the understanding of collective action (Ostrom, 2014).

Ostrom’s conjecture is that success of collective action is reliant upon group members identifying with one another; however, collectivity also requires a shared problem understood from its elemental level and embraced for the possibilities of the solution(s) resulting in mutual benefit. Ostrom’s (1990, pp. 55-56) theory of *Self-Organizing Collective Action* emphasizes the need to understand these factors:

- 1) group structure features, such as size, internal dynamics, institutional setting, desired actions, costs, outcomes, information available, and degree of control for individuals;
- 2) economic patterns and circumstances of individuals, such as resource dependency of individuals, scheme related risks, payoffs, issues, actions linked to outcomes,

commitments, and constraints; and

- 3) individual attributes, such as interpersonal relationships and involvements, degree of cohesion, shared interests, shared norms and understandings, norms and capacities to work together.

Consideration of whether those engaged in collective action can exhibit some measure of influence over their circumstances is important (Ostrom, 2000). Adger (2003) describes how the limitations of an individual actor are dependent upon their capacity to collaborate with others. After capturing the essence of the individuals, and the characteristics and dynamics within the group, the question arises why some individuals overcome challenges to working collectively, and others do not. Beyond Ostrom's assumptions, Christensen (2006) considers the equal importance of social norms that are (re)produced and reinforced through repetition of actions. For example, norms that maximize the welfare of the group over the individual bring attention to the possibilities and barriers for a group to understand the capacity of collective action, thereby potentiating social development.

Groups and collective units are built and sustained by people informed by a fabric of social norms. In practice, dense interpersonal relations, networks, and personal ties heavily influence the behaviour of groups. The institutionalist approach studies "actors' behaviour within its particular context to dismiss a priori assumption or suggestion concerning human nature or natural laws" (Czech, 2016, p. 6). Supported by Ostrom (2000), people's social activity often stems from that internalization of particular social norms that motivate action. Accordingly, Granovetter (1985) argues that individuals usually do not make conscious choices but are responding to norms and institutions that influence and guide choices. Underpinning institutionalist critique is refutation of ubiquity and invariability of the rationality of individuals (Sawyer, 2006). Alignment of the imperative for local solutions to local problems potentiates context-specific institutions and policies based on the rationality of a culturally accepted system of values (Lawrence et al., 2009). As such, the rationality of human actions is both contextually and inter-sectorally understood (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013). Interdependence of agents, through relationships and institutions, is where the essential nature of relationships is nurtured (Acker, 1992; Kaplan, 2008).

### 3.3 Gender-Based Analysis

Most countries have signed the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and similar conventions respecting the protection and equal treatment of women and girls. However, these conventions and agreements frequently fall short as they are unable to supersede existing social and political institutions. Socialization is a powerful force, embedded across the life span. Gender relations and gendered practices transmits social norms and practices, shapes power relations, dictates social expectations, and determines the opportunity to participate in formal and informal structures (UNDP, 2016). Often subconscious and invisible, gender roles determine the choices, attitudes, and motivations of individuals. Gender deeply embeds and simultaneously reinforces and refutes the interplay of structural and social forces, as well as individual cognitive and motivational processes.

Gender is critical in any social realm due to its embeddedness within practically every part of any structure. Gender essentially sets the roles and expectations of individuals based on, and beyond, biological sex. Gender shapes behaviours, opportunities, and choices and is an important consideration to understand the action and agency of the individual. Gender is shaped by the judgment of others and formed through processes of socialization. Analytically, a Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) identifies how gender contributes to traditional power imbalances, while also recognizing the practical and immediate needs necessary to reduce gaps and improve autonomy over one's own life (March et al., 1999; Porter & Sweetman, 2007; UNDP, 2000). Practically, gender analysis seeks to understand and characterize inequalities to ensure that interventions involve and benefit those who have the least resources (WHO, 2003). In essence, GBA aligns with the feminist principles to recognize gaps, expand choice, take action, eliminate gender stratification, and promote sexual rights and freedoms (Hobbs & Rice, 2013).

Intrinsic to a GBA approach is to understand the day-to-day experience of women and girls in their communities and to identify sources of inequality and discrimination based on gender. This transformational process requires communication, critical thinking, and imagining alternatives for those involved. Conversations, collaboration, and sharing of ideas and concerns are integral to critical thinking. Social and personal transformation occurs through an expanded awareness as we “strive for greater understanding across differences” (Hobbs & Rice, 2013, p. 128). bell hooks (2010) discusses the necessity for participants to find their voice, identify

matters relevant to them, discover new ways of seeing and knowing, and allow for better exchange of ideas.

The intersectionality and reflexivity of a GBA is not a narrow view of gender alone. Rather, the multiple “axis” of power and capacity helps “to understand how multiple forces work together and interact to reinforce conditions of inequality and social exclusion” (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women [CRIA], 2006, p. 5). In this sense, the various factors that define an individual’s identity, how they relate to the world, is accounted for when striving for a holistic understanding of a person, group, or situation. A GBA was used to analytically assess impacts and appropriateness of the development agenda for a group of vulnerable adolescent girls of the Mama Kwanza capacity building program in Arusha, TZ. The scope of this reflexive analysis detects gender-based exclusions impacting the capacities of the girls to shape their futures and their level of cooperation, while extending the analysis of gender relations to a global context. With an appreciation for the importance of gender-based differences of social development, this work seeks to identify how the Mama Kwanza targeted development initiative has impacted the lives and capacities of the girls, and, in turn, finds evidence to support social development for global sustainability.

### **3.3.1 Capacities Vulnerabilities Analysis Framework.**

The Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis (CVA) Framework (Anderson & Woodrow, 1998) was specifically developed to design and measure humanitarian interventions and NGO responses in times of crisis with the intent to identify immediate needs and build on existing strengths, while supporting long-term sustainable development for a community in need (Davis, Heghebaert & Peppiatt, 2004). The foundation of the CVA reflects on existing strengths (capacities) and weaknesses (vulnerabilities) in order to determine the preferred outcome(s) and sustainability potential of any given intervention(s). Capacities include material, physical, social, organizational resources, and general attitudes, whereas vulnerabilities include factors such as poverty, literacy, family structure, education, and exclusions which disadvantage individuals in achieving unmet needs, and require investment in strategic long-term development (Cannon, Twigg, & Rowell, 2009).

The CVA was developed initially to assess gendered roles, responsibilities, and power dynamics in the context of humanitarian intervention responses (March et al., 1999). The CVA framework is commonly used as a participatory approach for intervention planning and project

design, as well as the assessment of the long-term effectiveness of an intervention (Birks, Powell, & Hatfield, 2017). Therefore, people are not positioned as passive recipients, but rather as having the resources and abilities to support themselves and to guide intervention efforts. Individuals and communities are active agents with collective resources to orient efforts and guide change (Anderson & Woodrow, 1998). To secure and promote sustainable livelihoods after a disaster or extreme event, the CVA framework builds on protective factors, strives to mitigate vulnerabilities, and shifts to strengthening local access and capacities to initiate change.

The CVA framework is used retrospectively in this study, with an individual NGO administered projects which is deemed appropriate, according to Davis, Heghebaert & Peppiatt (2004). Heijmans & Victoria (2001) describe the CVA framework as allowing for a “snapshot of the community at a particular moment” (p. 43). Participatory methods of data collection with extensive engagement of the target group to identify vulnerabilities and capacities ensure a substantive and focused analysis of the situation at its root. The CVA approach is a “powerful way to help them [*sic*] increase their understanding of their own situation, and therefore their capacities to effect desired change” (Anderson & Woodrow 1998, p. 21). This enlightened method recognizes that people already ‘know’ their situation at some level, but often lack the skills or spaces for reflection at the level of understanding. The data collection is, in itself, a capacity-building exercise. Anderson and Woodrow (1998, pp. 9-25) suggest mechanisms to support the CVA framework as follows:

- secondary data review of a situation or context;
- semi-structured interview for general and specific information on the problems;
- historical profiling including group discussions, life histories, history tracing, community mapping of local resources and capacities;
- transect walks with informants to understand day-to-day activities and hazards, livelihood and coping strategies;
- participant perceptions, behaviour and decision-making discussions; and/or
- using ‘problem trees’ to identify so-called wicked or intractable problems, through addressing root causes and striving for sustainable interventions.

Emphasis on identifying root causes, assessing the capacity for people to organize, direct observation to gain a broader understanding, and methods of cross-checking verbal information are the foundation of analysis in the CVA framework. The standard analytical matrix (Figure 3.1) considers both the Capacities and Vulnerabilities using the three dimensions of physical/material, social/organizational, and motivational/attitudinal. As discussed by Anderson

and Woodrow (1998, pp. 9-25), the physical/ material dimension queries the physical vulnerabilities or the tangible capacities of the targeted group. These elements may include evidence of visible poverty, environment and infrastructure, housing, technology, general health status, available skills and labor, finance and income/production options, and/or access to resources. Social/ organizational considers the social organization in terms of levels of cohesion, formal/informal structures within the organization, as well as the relevance of social structures or models and their capacities to serve the needs of the group, including the impacts of disaster on social organization, including evidence and presence of internal and external conflicts. The motivational/ attitudinal dimension considers underlying beliefs and motivations of the group members and their perceptions of how the disaster has affected them. In this case, one may consider how people view themselves, held and/or practiced ideologies and belief systems; stressor coping modalities/ behaviours; shared beliefs; and underlying fatalistic or dependent feelings.

‘Capacities’ are considered proof of the strengths, available financial and income opportunities, characteristic behaviours, access to material (physical) resources, and possible social and organizational networks. Capacities also refer to the general attitudes, characteristics, and worldview of the individuals involved. Measures of ‘vulnerabilities’ are mostly predictive qualities of a target group and the understood level of disadvantage, marginalization, or risk factors. When used to design interventions, evidence of vulnerabilities is used to identify and incorporate ways to support populations to protect and recover from social, economic, or environmental shocks (March et al., 1999). Levels of vulnerabilities likely vary from individual to individual, or group to group, based on the level of underlying vulnerabilities, while the analysis of weaknesses include factors of health and wellbeing, such as physical, mental, and moral stability (Liesbet et al., 2014). Factors of capacities and opportunities for livelihood, however, include available assets, resources, various capital, access to income and exchange options, general skills and qualifications, willingness and motivation for change, social and political networks, and institutions embedded within the group or individual’s life (Anderson & Woodrow, 1998).



	Capacities		Vulnerabilities	
Physical/ Material				
Social/ Organizational				
Motivational/ Attitudinal				

*Figure 3.1 CVA Matrix (Anderson & Woodrow, 1998)*

The strength of the CVA framework is that the analysis allows for a broad and comprehensive discussion of both the strengths and limitations of a group, as well as the interrelationships between and among the three dimensions. This inclusive framework also brings to light issues of resilience, coping, organizational capacities, and group cohesiveness (March et al., 1999). Moreover, the standard analytical matrix (Figure 3.1) enables a clear and concise visualization of the data and facilitates consistent collection and enhanced comparability across contexts, sectors, and programs (Bankhoff, Frerks & Hilhorst, 2004). It is important to note, however, that not all programs and settings can be compared, with vast variations in their nature, objectives, and consequences. Although there is a standard data matrix, the absence of a defined set of indicators minimizes cross-comparisons. Without a set of indicators, analysis tends to be more descriptive, with depth, type, and amount of analysis becoming highly dependent on the interpretive skills of the researcher (Hunt, 2009). Furthermore, data sources can be heterogeneous and highly variable which limits or precludes generalizations or comparisons (Davis, Heghebaert & Peppiatt, 2004). This deficit is, in part, addressed through use of multiple data sources, which strengthens rigor and data validation. In essence, this highly participatory approach to data collection and analysis understands the ground-level reality and overall environment of the research context, relying on broader theoretical models for a more detailed and focused examination.

The CVA framework provides a broader analysis responding to more complex situations through a comprehensiveness which enables disaggregation by race, gender, status, changes over time, interaction between categories, measurements, and/or levels of impact (Anderson & Woodrow, 1998). In this study, the CVA framework is in its original basis, without further disaggregation. In the analysis, indices of social development are discussed, including capacities

and limitations for joint agency and collective action towards sustainable development.

### **3.4 Paradigmatic Positioning**

‘Sustainable development’ is a complex concept with at least 80 different, competing, and sometimes contradictory definitions (Mawere & Awuah-Nyamekye, 2013; Williams & Millington, 2004). However, sustainable living and the value of social inclusion are inherent in traditional societies, and Mwadume (1999) argues that traditional ways of knowing and living do not present any contradictions with the concept of sustainable development. Mawere and Awuah-Nyamekye (2013) present Indigenous and local knowledge as intrinsically linked to sustainable development within the intersection of human development and social harmony. However, historically regarded as irrational and unscientific, the ways of life of traditional societies have often been ignored in dialogues about optimal approaches to achieve development (Domfeh, 2007). Tuhiwai Smith (1999) describes the intentional and extensive marginalization of Indigenous knowledge within Western knowledge systems. It is increasingly clear that if the world is to develop sustainably, a conscious effort is needed, if not imperative, to equitably recognize and consider all approaches and potential partnership models, including Indigenous and Western science (Mawere & Awuah-Nyamekye, 2013). Chanza (2015) states that there is no way Africa can develop sustainably without recourse to her Indigenous knowledge systems, which are capable of guiding successful and effective policy and practice adaptation on the continent.

Western research epistemology embraces discovery and interpretation of facts rooted in relativism and ‘value-free’ inquiry. Hence, engaged research and ownership of stories are foreign or run contrary to the Western science paradigm, which “denies absolute assertions and ownership of stories” (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 28), while developing relationships are considered to facilitate bias and should be averted (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). An Indigenous paradigm, on the other hand, is relationally based (Wilson, 2001) and provides a safe and enabling environment for sharing alternative ways of thinking (Ermine, 1999). The paradigmatic positioning of Indigenous philosophical epistemology “is not the method, per se, that is the determining characteristic of Indigenous methodologies, but rather the interconnected relationship between the method and the paradigm that is consistent with an Indigenous worldview” (Kovach, 2010, p. 40). According to Wilson (2008), it is not the method, it is the epistemology that places the research orientation and purpose; Indigenous epistemology holds relational assumptions and

accountabilities at its core. For instance, an underlying assumption is that ‘data quality’ within an Indigenous epistemology depends on the success of engagement and a relationship between the researched and the researcher as well as between the researcher and the readers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Wilson (2008) describes the shared aspects of Indigenous ontology and epistemology to include relationality, from inception of the research through to the final presentation of the information. Within this paradigm, there is acknowledgement that ideas and knowledge are shared, and ultimately, understood, not ‘uncovered’ (Drawson, Toombs, & Mushquash, 2017).

Wilson (2008) describes the growing awareness of similarities and experiences of Indigenous peoples worldwide which reflects that through “systemic knowledge bases of the original peoples of the world, the term Indigenous [has increasingly] refer[red] to that knowledge system which is inclusive of all” (Wilson, 2008, p. 54). Indigenous research is asset-based (Roe et al., 2012; Simmons & Lehmann, 2013) seeking patterns, deeper understandings of self and connections to others, as opposed to merely deconstructing the other to reconstruct to fulfill our research imperatives (Chinn, 2007). Mi’kmaw Elder Albert Marshall outlines research principles known as ‘Two-Eyed-Seeing’/ ‘Etuaptmumk’ referring to

learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledges and ways of knowing... and learning to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all. (Marshall cited in Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 11)

Epistemologically and methodologically, we are now able to embrace the intersections, collaborations, and potentials of multiple and contrary perspectives. Recognizing multiple ways of knowing, those with Two-Eyed-Seeing, or Multiple-Eyed-Seeing (Martin, 2012; Bartlett et al., 2012) may accelerate our research experiences by building on the strengths and value of the various perspectives while drawing on deep understandings of moving forward together. Bartlett et al. (2012) describes how the critical and conscious researcher learns from seeing the strengths from multiple ways of knowing.

Multiple-Eyed-Seeing recognizes that multiple understandings or lenses are necessary to understand and address local and global challenges humankind faces and seeks to avoid the division between knowledge, and the domination and/or the assimilation of one worldview. This lens reconciles worldviews through ‘ethical space’ (Ermine, 2007), which creates respectful space for two groups with disparate worldviews to meaningfully engage. It is “a venue to step

out of our allegiances, to detach from the cages of our mental worlds and assume a position where human to human-to-human dialogue can occur” (Ermine, 2007, p. 202). This ‘third space’ opens channels for new ways of thinking about and understanding concepts or other paradigms (Bhabha, 2004). Elder Albert Marshall teaches of the gift of multiple perspectives to “use all our understandings so we can leave the world a better place ... to fine-tune your mind, looking for another perspective and a better way of doing things” (Marshall cited in Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 11-12). For this dissertation, an Indigenous paradigm was adopted, practiced, and woven throughout the project to do just that: to see it from another way.

Drawson et al. (2017) emphasize that choosing an Indigenous research approach, and more broadly an Indigenous paradigm, enables the researcher to “situate[e] within the context as inherent in the process” (p. 13). According to Cameron et al. (2014), an Indigenous methodology allows the researcher access into the Indigenous world view rather than from a distance. For Marten (2012), “when you are relating in a personal way, a relationship is being developed. Sharing sides of the story, speaking and listening, writing, and reading what is revealed creates an intimate and strong relationship between all involved” (p. 20). The effort to internalize learning and identify internal responses and feelings is the integrity of the Indigenous approach. During this internalization of the research experience, the knower begins to gain strength and ‘true knowing’ (Drawson et al., 2017). Using qualitative and community-based participatory research methods, this ethnography takes a critical gendered reflexive approach to describe and discuss physical, social, and motivational vulnerabilities and capacities among the adolescent girls in Arusha, TZ. A reflexive analysis of the Mama Kwanza Girls’ Group capacity building program provides insights and implications for social development, gender equity, and the potential of collective action to meet global sustainable goals.

## 4. Qualitative Methodology

*Starting research from the standpoint of the oppressed is valid because it is often the lived experiences of those most ignored by dominant structures that provide significant insight and perspective. Solutions to complex human problems can become visible when research is started at the bottom of the social hierarchy. (Liamputtong, 2007)*

### 4.1 Research Approach

The MKSHI project serves some of the most vulnerable people in the global structure, who rank among the lowest in health outcomes worldwide (World Bank, 2012). This ‘unique’ position of the participants provides insight into the barriers, experiences, pathways, and aspirations of adolescent girls in Arusha, TZ. Compelled by critical questions about the roots and implications of an inequitable and unsustainable global structure, a qualitative methodology is adopted for this study to seek an understanding from a human perspective. Qualitative researchers recognize that participants have agency and knowledge that is critical to any outcome (Stanfield, 2006). Such views are pivotal to provide a contextual understanding and allow the application of research findings beyond the localized research setting. Qualitative researchers, specifically critical qualitative researchers, make up a community of researchers who seek to challenge and unpack universal and normative claims (Brown & Strega, 2005) by finding the “public roots of private troubles” (Mills, 1959, p. 25). Moreover, rather than ignoring or dismissing, qualitative researchers prioritize the human experience and personal stories as a means to deep listening and layering of the complexities of the human condition (Finlay & Gough, 2003). The qualitative analysis seeks to co-create a ‘knowing’ that encompasses interpretations, meanings, and worldviews of the researcher, the researched, and the readers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Finlay, 2002; Krumer-Nevo, 2012; Wolcott, 1999). Properly conducted, qualitative research is participatory and collaborative. Through this process, seeking alternate perspectives involves working together to re-imagine how things can change (Green & Thorogood, 2014; Pitts & Smith, 2007).

Recognizing the centrality of participant perspectives, engagement, and participation within the research enterprise, proponents of community-based research (CBR) approaches emblaze the imperative of partnerships between the researcher and research participants (Israel et al., 2005; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008), and by extension, the readers or consumers of the research learnings. Brown & Strega (2005, p.10) identify three objectives of anti-oppressive

research: 1) to develop a critical consciousness in both the researcher and the participants; 2) to improve the lives of those involved in the research process; and 3) to transform fundamental social structures and research relationships. The anti-oppressive philosophical roots of CBR require the mutual learning and collaboration of multiple perspectives and conflicting positions to provide a social critique of destructive institutional practices (Markiewicz, 2012). Critical approaches call out power relations and claims of ‘authority’ to ensure representation, instead of objectification of “others as a problem to be solved” (Dodson, 2003, p. 27). As an interdisciplinary and multi-method approach to complex research environments, CBR is more agile in responding to community identified needs, by (re)presenting data using collaborative methods of inquiry, genuine engagement, and reflexive analysis (May & Perry, 2011). A reframing of the research agenda is realized with this level of engagement and participation as it may reveal those elements which were previously unheard, unseen, or repressed (Pitts & Smith, 2007). As a critical approach, participation and co-learning in CBR disrupts the binaries and disparities characteristic of the current global cognitive structures (e.g., rich/poor; have/have not; us/them; men/women; north/south; developed/developing). Recognizing that ‘truth’ is contextual and binaries are the root of disparities and inequalities among people, co-learning and co-creating knowledge is essential in a research partnership.

A co-learning journey is not just about gaining information, but also sharing information and stories, building on ideas, and creating bonding relationships. Community-based and participatory research methods, including narratives, ethnographic and autobiographic approaches, visual representations, and collaborative discussions, support a relational research approach (Denzin, Lincoln & Smith, 2008; Sasakamoose et al., 2016; Wilson, 2001). CBR methods are supportive approaches for Indigenous research where “research works in partnership to prioritize the needs of those most directly affected by the research” (FNIGC, 2014, p. 10). CBR researchers understand that all knowledge is incomplete and contextual and from the lens of the people affected (Liamputtong, 2007; Sachs, 2015a; Steinberg & Cannella, 2012). An essential element and characteristic of CBR researchers is the ability to respect the standpoint of the research environment, demonstrating ‘cultural humility’ (Foronda et al., 2016); ‘cultural competency’ (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998); ‘culture relativism’ (Donnelly, 1984); or ‘person-centered’ (Rogers, 1979) research. Wilson & Neville (2009) argue that culturally safe research involves frameworks based on equitable partnerships, full

participation, and power-shifting. Co-learning and co-production of knowledge emerge through research embeddedness in daily life and a sharing of social and cultural reality (Ermine, 2007) to fill the ‘missing middle’ of research knowledge (May & Perry, 2011).

In alignment with qualitative research, the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions of this study bear witness to no single ‘truth’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), but rather pursue ‘understanding’ (Danzin, 1990; Green & Thorogood, 2014). The objective of this research is not to identify nor suggest ‘right’ behaviours or choices for the participating girls, but to work to understand their perspectives and learn from how they experience the world (Green & Thorogood, 2014). Qualitative researchers recognize and acknowledge that participants are active agents with expertise to acknowledge relevant concerns and barriers, along with the capacity to engage in emancipatory action for social change (Campbell & Bunting, 1991; Liamputtong, 2007; Mansuri & Rao, 2012). As such, direct participation in the research processes is as vital as the outcomes (Williams, Petrucka, Bassendowski & Bettker, 2014). Particularly with adolescents (Cleaver, 1999; Samuels et al., 2015; Williams et al., 2014), all involved in the research process must be able to locate themselves in the research and be recognized as active, meaningful participants, and significant contributors in planning for investment or sustainability from inputs to outcomes. The value of participating has the potential to raise critical consciousness and deepen understanding for the researcher and researched alike, and in turn, stimulate avenues for social innovation and individual transformation (Allan & Arber, 2018; Denzin, Lincoln & Smith, 2008; Mannik & McGarry, 2017).

## **4.2 Ethnography**

This research is undertaken as an ethnography. Ethnography has its intellectual roots in the science of understanding and researching the ‘other’ (Fine, 1994) to capture and understand customs, values, and practices. As a literary method, an ethnography involves the disciplined and detailed account of research contexts and settings potentiating usefulness across disciplines (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Primarily, the ethnographer seeks to make sense of a lived reality with an emphasis on and acknowledgment of interpretation (Denzin, 1997). The research route is to “know people, rather than knowing about them” (Lofland, 1971, p. 128). Grounded by the direct observation of the ‘naturally occurring’ research setting (Geertz, 1983), this ethnography examines the ‘unique’ position of development projects, such as Mama Kwanza,

that allow for the observation of specific details and involvement in the local context to better understand challenges and experiences of daily lives. Engaging directly with the young women of Mama Kwanza, understanding their capacities and vulnerabilities, provides a greater understanding of the participants themselves, and the applicability of the research more broadly.

Many development efforts, strategies, programs, and policies are designed to ‘direct’ and ‘prescribe’ solutions on ‘behalf of’ people. However, Stanfield (2006, p. 725) discusses the “restorative justice functions of qualitative methodological techniques such as ethnography, oral history, case studies, social experiments, media analysis and archival methods.” Essential to ethnography is participant observation, which arguably is central in any social research method, as we cannot truly study the social world “without being in the world” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 67) or to “go inside” the worlds of those in the research setting (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010, p. 230). Explicit interpretation of the meaning and function of day-to-day behaviours, habits, norms, and interactions is the crux of analysis. All interpretation of data must be situated within a theoretical framework, while being informed and given meaning through the participants’ standpoints (Tyler, 1985; Wolcott, 1999).

Although a problematic dichotomy (Narayan, 1993), the insider/outsider perspective envisions the shifting patterns of participation and overlapping access to knowledge and information. The ‘insider’ holds a unique knowing and understanding of experienced reality and embodies possible solutions (for instance, what works, what does not work, what is needed), whereas the ‘outsider’ brings a perspective devoid of complications brought on by membership or socialization within the community norms and values while critically observing ‘the familiar’ with a naivety (Whitt, 1993). The ‘outsider’ researcher also views from a theoretical foundation that may, or may not, provide understanding or explanation for the roots of a solution. Insider participants provide the rationale and logic for demonstrated behaviour and choices, while the outsider researcher reflects on philosophical meaning of the data.

The “[qualitative] researcher is a central figure who actively constructs the collection, selection, and interpretation of data” which is “a joint product of the participants, researchers, and their relationships” (Finlay & Gough, 2003, p. 5). So, within an ethnographic approach, the critical reflection, or the ‘reflexivity’ of the researcher is a flagship element (Cruz & Higginbottom, 2013). Reflexivity essentially requires extensive and deep critical examination of the researcher as well as the research context itself (Finlay & Gough, 2003). Hodgson (1999)



argues:

There is no neutral position in ethnographic research and writing; to be neutral or not to take a position always sides with the structures of domination – be they global, capitalism, imperialism, or patriarchy. The process of research, however objective and detached some might pretend to be, is always interwoven with other processes of domination and webs of power relations. (p. 244)

At the personal level, reflexivity functions as a check and balance to identify what narrative is presented. Data and findings were revisited and reviewed with the community in order to verify accuracy of the interpretation and representation of research findings, which further built understanding and contextual clarity for participants, researcher, and stakeholders (including readers). Mannik & McGarry (2017) argue that participation in the research has the potential to raise critical consciousness and deepen understanding for the researcher, researched and readers alike, and, in turn, can stimulate social and individual transformational change. This reflection on the data spurred new insights and additional research questions and held the potential to elevate consciousness and promote transformational change. Kovach (2009) posits that to make the holistic, relational meaning of the research visible requires the researcher's own reflexive narrative. The relationships, knowledge sharing, connections, and interconnections that were made in the research process informed the reflexive analysis. The reflexive analysis was also applied to understand the broader implications for the work. Through the in-depth reflexive orientation of this work, the hope is that both the outsiders and the insiders of this research are transformed or 'enlightened' through their involvement and interpretation of the findings (Archer, 2009).

At an ethical level, reflexivity is an essential process for the researcher to engage in to ensure the research is appropriate. The process required self-reflection and full disclosure of my perspectives, stories, ideologies, understandings, lens, interests, and worldview. As researchers are not objective or unbiased (Krumer-Nevo, 2012), my biases and interests are brought forward and discussed through a reflexive process. As such, the investment and intention to understand the lived realities of the adolescent girls, and to discern the impact of participation in the Mama Kwanza project for the girls, was disclosed and discussed to the participants and stakeholders. This disclosure was essential for trust-building, power-sharing, and authentic partnerships between myself as the researcher, and the people I worked with and engaged in throughout this work. As a relational approach to research, the engagement in the study created connections and

relationships that continue beyond the completion of the research project. At an epistemological level, collectivist traditions and relational worldviews seek to understand how the researcher and the researched shape and are shaped by the connections, insights, and transformation derived from the process. The data and ethnographic accounts are presented as stories to allow readers to draw their conclusions and apply personal perspectives. My observations, findings, and personal transformations are presented as part of this work. As Wilson (2008) states, “if research doesn’t change you as a person, then you haven’t done it right” (p. 135).

### **4.3 Research Setting and Sample**

The MKSHI was funded to address social determinant factors and challenges that influence access to care and client outcomes for vulnerable groups throughout Arusha and Ngorongoro Districts of Tanzania. The select sub-groups were child-bearing aged women, newborns, children under five years old, orphan children, and adolescents no longer involved in formal school. The project was tasked to enhance the capacities of the target populations and aimed to provide clinical, economic, and social supports that were responsive to local needs, expectations, and realities. The Mama Kwanza initiative worked to support the social-economic and health status of their participants and clients. Through the establishment of six health centers (five clinics and one outreach clinic), training opportunities provided for patients, providers, and partners on a range of skills (e.g., foundations to advanced maternal and child outcomes), capacity building efforts (e.g., technology use, business, and personal development, data utilization), and specific programs for at risk/hard-to-reach populations (e.g., health kiosks). As a partnership between the University of Saskatchewan (Canada), Green Hope Organisation (Tanzania), and the Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology (Tanzania), the project provides insight into the quality, applicability, and effectiveness of a health-focused, socio-economic development program, and service provider within an internationally funded project for target population outcomes and deliverables.

The research activities aimed to capture the experiences and lived realities for some of the adolescent girls who attended the Mama Kwanza capacity building program. The ‘Girls Group’ was established by Mama Kwanza through targeted program funding for ‘vulnerable adolescent girls’ -- defined as those between the ages of 15 and 25 who were no longer attending the formal education system. Throughout the project, from June 2012 to April 2018, Mama Kwanza worked with four cohorts of girls no longer attending the formal school system, for reasons

ranging from lack of resources for school fees and performing poorly with low attendance rates, to pregnancies, violence, family rejection, and social stigma. The girls were school-aged and from diverse ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds.

The participating cohort for this research included six girls who had voluntarily and independently enrolled in a capacity-building ‘Girls Group’ program with the Green Hope Organization. The participating girls were referred to the Mama Kwanza ‘Girls Group’ initiative, either by word of mouth or were invited directly by a project staff member and encouraged to participate in the capacity building program. None of the girls had a previous relationship with any of the other members of the newly formed Girls Group. Under the Mama Kwanza umbrella project, Green Hope provided modest funding to the Girls Group for expenses and activities. The participating cohort enrolled in the Girls Group program in June – August 2016. Primary data collection occurred during this period; however, relationships developed with the Mama Kwanza staff and stakeholders upon the initiation of this research project in 2012 and contact with the participating adolescent girls went beyond the 2016 data collection period. The final field visit occurred in April 2018.

#### **4.4 Research Questions and Objectives**

With social inclusion as a pillar of sustainable development, the research questions guiding this work seek to determine the capacities and vulnerabilities for social development and a sense of collectivity among the group of girls to address shared needs and goals. Understanding the opportunities for social development and collective action, this study questions the policies and practices guiding the development agenda (SDGs) and development programming (MKSHI) to address the local needs of adolescent girls, and considers how these learning can apply to the global context.

The research questions guiding this work are as follows:

- Q1. What are the vulnerabilities and capacities of the adolescent girls of Mama Kwanza Girls Group capacity building program?
- Q2. How are social inclusion, mutual support, and collectivity demonstrated by the girls?
- Q3. Does the Mama Kwanza project support the needs and desired futures of the adolescent girls involved in the development project?
- Q4. How can social development support collective action?

With these four guiding research questions, this work aims to meet the following six objectives:

1. Identify what makes adolescent girls vulnerable in terms of physical, social, and motivational barriers;
2. Identify the support, strengths, and capacities available to support the social development of girls;
3. Determine the shared needs and goals within the group;
4. Identify the elements of social inclusion and collectivity among the participants, including factors that lead towards collective action, and factors that deter the potential of the collective group;
5. Identify the relevance of Mama Kwanza programming to meet the needs of the girls;
6. Understand how a collectivist approach can advance social development for the SDG 2030 Agenda.

#### **4.5 Research Methods**

In a multi-method research design, the following qualitative research methods were used for data collection, as outlined below, and described in detail in the following sections:

- Focused Ethnography: included thick descriptions of group interaction dynamics, evidence of mutual support, and collective problem-solving. Data were derived from detailed field notes, photo-elicitation, personal reflections, and reflexive analysis (Denzin, 1997; Thomas, 1993; Yanow et al., 2012).
- Participatory Diagramming:
  - *Mind Mapping* – Group brainstorming exercises were used to establish key concepts and a shared understanding of needs, priorities, vulnerabilities, and challenges (Biktimirov & Nilson, 2006; Liu et al., 2014; Trochim, 1989).
  - *Journey Mapping* – Where are you now? What is the future? What do you want/need/desire? Who are you? What was your path here? Journey maps identified significant life events and relationships (International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), 2009; Williams et al., 2014).
  - *Social Network Mapping* – The mapping of spatial movement provided insight into distances traveled, daily patterns, access to resources, and interconnection of social networks among the participants (Chambers, 2006; Harrington, 1995).

- Group Discussions: used to establish a shared understanding of challenges, priorities, desired futures, skills, and strengths. Domains of subjective quality of life (i.e., emotional, personal evaluation, social connection, and support) (Creswell, 2013; Samuels et al., 2015) framed discussions.
- Interviews: personal and stakeholder interviews were conducted to targeted questions to refine the understanding of the capacities and vulnerabilities of the girls, the relevancy and achieved objectives of the Mama Kwanza programming, and to examine the possibility for collective action (Mishler, 1986; Riessman, 1993; Willis, 2007).

#### **4.5.1 Focused Ethnography**

Recorded ethnographic field notes extended throughout the research project, from 2012-2018. Based on observation, ethnographic field notes produced written accounts (*graphein*) of the social world of a people (*ethnos*) – including actors, actions, interactions, and settings – to understand the meaning and meaning-making processes of a group (Yanow, Ybema & Hulst, 2012). The attempt was to uncover and follow a small number of participants within specific research context in great, or ‘thick’ detail (Geertz, 1973). As one studies the “socio-cultural contexts, processes, and meanings within cultural systems” (Whitehead, 2005, p. 4), it is imperative to attend to the following dimensions: a) social contexts which consider social systems such as households, families, networks, organizations, institutions, and the relationships with broader inter-societal linkages; b) socio-cultural processes which include interactions of individuals within relevant social systems, personal and shared histories, and patterns needing fulfillment; and c) socio-cultural meanings which inform social behaviours and choices (Whitehead, 2005, p. 9). This ethnographic study recorded field data in rich description and detail, including observations, personal experiences, and reflections in the literary writing style characteristic of ethnographic studies (Appaudrai, 1986; Herzfeld, 2005; Scheper-Hughes, 1992). [see: Appendix D].

The complexity of this research context is well suited for a focused ethnographic study and is congruent with a method initially developed by the WHO (Gove & Pelto, 1994). Useful for a small unit of analysis or short field visits, a focused ethnography seeks to understand how a group receiving an intervention views their situation, typical behaviours, conditions, and shared beliefs (Knoblauch, 2005; Pelto et al., 2013). The unit of analysis for this study, the

‘Girls Group’ were organized for capacity building purposes. This focused ethnography aims to reveal collective perspectives, needs, vulnerabilities, desires, and capacities, embedded within cultural, social, political, and economic structures that frame the group (Buchanan & Bryman, 2009; Savage, 2006). Participant observation, carefully watching, and learning (Davies, 1999), strategically brought a closeness or familiarity within the group through involvement in day-to-day activities. This relationship building, sharing, and participating are congruent with essential aspects of ethical Indigenous and relational-based research (Ermine, 2007; Wilson, 2008). Within an Indigenous methodology, Kovach (2009) describes ‘*relationship*’ and ‘*observing*’ as equally significant as gathering knowledge and making meaning through direct data collection methods. A detailed account of group dynamics and observations of collective action and indices of social development are noted and analyzed.

The ethnographic description and interpretation of the research context and guided by the underlying principles of the *Ethnographically Informed Community and Cultural Assessment: Cultural Systems Paradigm* (CSP), as proposed by Whitehead (2005) [Appendix B]. Field notes recorded data throughout the research project beginning in 2012, and findings generated from ongoing observation and interpretation throughout multiple field visits. Observations, comments, and views continuously recorded as detailed accounts and reflected on in iterations (Creswell, 2013; Schwandt, 1994), these reflections of the ‘outsider’ researcher was guided and informed by ‘insider’ cultural informants (Mama Kwanza staff) and research participants themselves (Guba & Lincoln, 1997).

Primarily a focused ethnography, this research seeks to focus on an analytic process informing interpretation that makes sense of a lived reality (Denzin, 1997). The reflexive approach embedded within the analysis contextualizes and describes the research findings as a route to “know people, rather than knowing about them” (Lofland, 1971, p. 128). This immersive experience with a small number of participants centred within a highly specific research context allowed for detailed observations to be recorded with ample information and personal reflections throughout data collection, seeking to “go inside” the world and record social lives within the social context of everyday life (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010, p. 230). Explicit interpretation of the meaning and function of day-to-day behaviours, habits, norms, and interactions were recorded and served as the core of the analysis. The reflexive analysis considers instances and events that “fell into gaze” (Davies, 1999, p. 35), including the

significant events, context, interpretations, and describes how my worldview was changed and impacted as a result of the research.

#### **4.5.2 Participatory Diagramming**

Participatory Diagramming (PD), a group-based qualitative research method, was used as a primary data collection method with the Girls Group participants to provide a visual representation of what the group perceived as significant. With the minimal intervention of the researcher in developing PD outputs, participants had the freedom to shape the discussion and create a visual reflection of their participatory maps. The process was driven and discussed by the participants, while observation and ethnographic notes were captured by the researcher to provide insight into how the group thinks and feels. In this respect, the PD activity identified priorities, reasons for wanting or not wanting, motivation for doing or not doing certain things, while pinpointing specific details of local contexts (International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD, 2009; Mascarenhas & Kumar, 1991). The collaborative nature of this participatory approach builds group cohesion and identity (Guijt & Shah, 1998). Williams et al. (2014) found that PD facilitates dialogue related to critical issues, specifically among vulnerable African youth, resulting in stimulating action on identified priority issues. Of all the PD methods that have been tried and applied in a development context, it is “participatory mapping that has been the most widespread” (Chambers, 2006, p. 1).

The methodological purpose of using PD was not just to create a series of data points for this research. Part of the PD process was aimed to generate discussion and, thus, a greater understanding of the issues, challenges, and desired outcomes for both the participants and the researcher (Davis, 1999). The active participation in PD is a primary strength of the method, particularly as it seeks to build solutions especially amongst the most marginalized through a layering and purposive refining in understanding of issues (Guijt & Shah, 1998; Finlay, 2002). Providing the space and safety for reflection on one’s own life and circumstances, Kesby (2000) reports that the active participation of young women “helps to create a clearer understanding of life circumstances and helps to increase the ownership of solutions to one’s own problems” (p. 28). PD brings individuals together to share ideas, visions, and commonalities to advance community cohesion and social action, whilst minimizing the effects of cultural and linguistic variances (Alcorn, 2000). The reflexive analysis of the PD data is to reveal shared meanings and explore individual and collective group structures (Wang &

Nantulya, 2008).

#### ***4.5.2.1 Mind Mapping***

Mind mapping exercises asked participants to note ideas and thoughts about a key question (Buzan, 1974). Aimed to find creative associations between ideas, Biktimirov and Nilson (2006) define mind mapping as “visual, non-linear representations of ideas and their relationships” (p. 290). Through spontaneous thinking and associations, similar to concept maps, Davies (2011) describes the free-form and unconstrained structure of mind mapping, with “no limits on the ideas and links that can be made, and there is no necessity to retain an ideal structure or format” (p. 282). Such a free flow of ideas enables participants to (re)imagine and explore concepts while creating conceptual connections and associations. Thus, mind maps are principally association maps derived through active engagement of participants undertaking deeper thinking and seeking significant learnings (Davies, 2011).

Mind mapping exercises promoted creative thinking and encouraged ‘brainstorming’ of desired futures and challenges faced by the girls. Through the process of brainstorming, the “basic ordering of ideas” (Buzan & Buzan, 2003, p. 6) was sought out and placed in a hierarchical structure and further developed in the analysis. A critical advantage of mind mapping is the nonlinear ‘open flow format’ (Liu et al., 2014). Kokotovich (2008) argues that mind maps are invaluable in enabling a more fulsome understanding of a subject’s key concepts as a foundation for strengthening problem analysis. Despite this strength, the associations between concepts are often limited and simplistic (Davies, 2011) which Liu et al (2014) suggests limits broader analytical understanding. However, this shortcoming is addressed in this study through the use of multiple methods to more fully explore the ideas the girls generated during the initial mind mapping exercises. The ideas brought forward by the Girls Group during the mind mapping sessions were further developed and are detailed in Chapter 5.

#### ***4.5.2.2 Journey Mapping***

Journey mapping was conducted with the girls to bring a better understanding of the life paths of the participants. Symbols elicited meaning beginning with an icon selected by the participant, followed by mapping significant life events, including birth, death, sickness, education, home, love, happy and sad events, and other familiar linkages. The objective of the journey mapping is to generate a vision or preferred direction for the future. The mapping



activity is aimed to create a collaborative group endeavor toward a targeted, identified, shared goal. Although the diagram was encouraged to represent an ‘ideal’ journey to problem solve and strategize solutions (Williams et al., 2014), the journey maps detail the representations of life challenges, opportunities, and barriers identified by participants. Journey mapping exercises encourage a thought-provoking environment for brainstorming and creative thinking (IFAD, 2009).

#### **4.5.2.3 Social Network Mapping**

Social Network Mapping utilized a Google Map™ image of the local community. By creating a ‘spaghetti’ diagram, participants individually shared a pathing map which was colligated to develop a collaborative *Social Network Map* (Chambers, 2006). Essential local resources (i.e., shops, clinics, churches, landmarks, markets, schools, water, etc.) are identified on the map with a neutral color and appropriate symbol. This baseline ‘map’ is then augmented by the participant using a uniquely colored pen to identify resources and services they routinely access. Next, the participants mapped their daily patterns, beginning at their homes and drawing lines to places they frequent regularly. This approach visualizes where resources are located, range of distances traveled, reach of social networks, and intersection of patterns among participants. Social maps are overlaid on a master map to include all individual maps, allowing participants to recognize where daily lives take each other, common points of intersections, and an opportunity to discuss barriers to access resources available in the community. These spatial maps also assist in identifying the existing and potential physical, economic, and social connections among participants.

#### **4.5.3 Group Discussions**

The intention of participatory methods is for communities to determine the research agenda and participate in the process of research, action, and program development (Israel et al., 2005). Further, participatory methods:

[p]rovide a scientific and credible way of giving voice so that they [sic] are heard. Being heard means that the decisions that are made are relevant for their needs and not based solely on preconceived notions of recipients. (Pelto et al., 2013, p. 45)

Group discussions and interaction mapping sessions were critical to this participatory research design. Complementary to an ethnographic approach, group discussions account for the specific

histories and personal accounts of the participants. Within the group discussions, participants reflect on theirs and other's participatory mapping exercises. Group discussions maximized the directed interaction among the participants and provided the researcher access to the shared group culture, norms, and understandings (Green & Thorogood, 2014). Participants were encouraged to speak openly, discuss, and share freely about priorities and challenges in their lives. Such discussions and sharing circles are reflective of Indigenous methodologies as they create space for sharing and exchanging perspectives with one another (Wilson, 2008).

#### **4.5.4 Interviews**

Interviewing methods allow meaningful engagement with participants and stakeholders and enable them to offer their own opinions and experiences, thereby allowing researchers to more fully understand the data within the broader historical and political processes through direct and targeted questioning. Allan & Walker (1992) emphasize that direct inquiry, such as interviews, are crucial when studying how participants have experienced specific situational conditions, and how social or personal problems have emerged. Deep probing into the “outward show of behaviour to explore thoughts, feelings, and intentions” (Stanfield, 2006, p. 16) reveals the ‘why’ of select behaviours and leads to the deeper understanding of the research environment and data. Aktoto (2013, p. 75) stresses that use of flexible interviewing methods creates space for “more accessible research when there are large number of non-literate people ... and can better relate to and serve all people, helping us understand them, and ourselves, more fully.”

#### **4.6 Data Collection**

The data collection for this work occurred between 2012 and 2018, including four field visits that supported data collection and validation. Ethnographic field notes, observations, and contextual data collection began during the first field visit in 2012 and continued throughout the subsequent three site visits. Primary data collection, including participatory mapping, group discussions, personal interviews, and ethnographic field notes, were collected during the field visit of 2016. During the data collection field visit in 2016, the recruitment of six girls from the 4th Mama Kwanza Girl's Group occurred. The group met daily for three months. The Girls Group participants engaged in data collection exercises and supported data interpretation throughout the project to completion in 2018. In 2017, four stakeholders were interviewed and

also reflected on the findings from the data analysis to ensure accuracy. Results reference ethnographic field notes, data collected with participants, and photographs collected during site visits. Excerpts, anecdotes, and images support the findings and conclusions. A field visit explicitly designed for data validation and final follow-up occurred in April 2018. Interviewed stakeholders, two of the Girls Group participants, and multiple broader community members through meaningful conversation validated the data and the researcher's interpretation.

Data collection exercises occurred with the Girls Group participants in 2016. Conducted during the regular daily programming, the girls attended at Green Hope Organization, consent for project participation happened at the first session, in conjunction with my formal introduction by the group leader. I had a previously developed relationship with the group leader, established from a previous site visit. The group leader supported the research as the research assistant, and served as interpreter, both between English and Kiswahili and between participants and me. The group leader/research assistant also provided ongoing support for cultural interpretation and data analysis. This group leader is a graduate from an earlier Girl's Group and has since opened her own business with her husband to support their two children. The researcher spent time with the participants of the Girls Group for several weeks to develop mutual trust before engaging in participatory data gathering methods.

Participatory Mapping and group discussion sessions occurred during morning English lessons. From these sessions, Mind Maps (*Waszo Ramani*) were co-created with the girls, identifying words associated with 'the good life' and 'life challenges'. Dynamic group discussions around 'skills and abilities'; 'if I could do anything, I would...' and 'who do we go to for help' continued for half a day. Main ideas were noted on a whiteboard as the girls talked while responses and field notes recorded. In the Journey Mapping (*Maisha Ramani*) exercise, participants used paper symbols to represent milestones or significant events on the lifeline, individually creating Journey Maps. Each participant mapped her life, indicating, recording, and explaining significant events on her lifeline. The symbols included birth, death, sickness, education, house, love, happy, and sad events. The individual journey maps were created with large pieces of paper, colour markers, and symbols representing these major life events. The structure of the map (i.e., linear, webbed, hierarchical, etc.) was determined by the participants. However, most presented their maps as a simple diagram with clear links and progressions of significant events. Through dialogue with the researcher and research assistant, variables of

vulnerability and met/unmet needs were identified at critical points along their lifeline, noted in field notes, and were incorporated into the analysis. The participants retained their original Journey Maps and photographs of the maps were used in the analysis [see section 5.2].

The final mapping exercise conducted during the training sessions, facilitated by the researcher and the group leader, was Social Network Mapping (*Kijamii Mtandao Ramani*). Each participant received a Google Map™ screenshot of Arusha city. After a lengthy discussion about what the map represented and shifting the perceptions of the participants to understand the city from an aerial point of view, the connecting point, Green Hope Organization, was identified as a central reference point. Each participant identified their home location and other significant landmarks and reference points. Participants identified their path traveled throughout the week, as well as main gathering points and places where they congregated with others. Individual maps were laid over each other to identify aspects of connections for the girls, outside of their mutual connection point, Green Hope. This exercise identified the degree in which the daily lives of girls currently intersected or could emerge [Figure 5.8].

The research assistant conducted individual semi-structured interviews with each of the six girls in a private location. The questions from the approved interview guide were interpreted from English into Kiswahili by the research assistant, who conducted the interviews in Kiswahili. Responses were translated into English and recorded by hand on the interview guide. The interview guide collected demographic information about the girls, including age, tribe, level of education, occupation, parental and family information, her living situation, and how she learned about the Mama Kwanza program. The interview asked about significant illnesses, life events, and asked about interests, including hobbies and skills. The interview also probed the girls about where they go when they need help, suggesting services and programs offered in the region. The questions were structured to determine capacities and vulnerabilities within three spheres: motivational and attitudinal (happy, hopeful, have a positive outlook); physical skills and resources (opportunities and challenges to better one's life); and social inclusion and organization (network of friends and family to help, trust others, hold shared values). The final section of the interview discussed the degree of interest and level of motivation each girl had in terms of working with other girls from the Girls Group on a joint project or business. The final question was aimed to spark the imagination or future orientation of the girls and asked: 'If you could do or have anything in the world, what would it be'?

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with staff members and directors of the Mama Kwanza initiative about the perceived strengths and vulnerabilities of the Mama Kwanza participants. They included successes, limitations, and future opportunities to realize Mama Kwanza's capacity-building objectives and outreach effectiveness. Stakeholder interviews were conducted in English by the researcher, audio recorded, and later transcribed. Four stakeholder interviews were conducted and de-identified with pseudonym SK#. Four stakeholder interviews were conducted (i.e., SK#1, SK#2, SK#3, SK#4). Stakeholders included the program staff and directors of Mama Kwanza MKSHI. Interviews were audio-recorded on a hand-held device, were transcribed and coded for evidence of capacities and barriers for the girls individually, and as a group. Stakeholders were asked about successes and challenges in meeting the overarching objectives of the MKSHI initiative. Quotations from stakeholder interviews support research findings and excerpts are included in the findings. Stakeholders also reviewed data and analysis for an accurate and respectful depiction of the Arusha community and the lives of the Mama Kwanza girls.

The overall social, cultural, and natural environment of the field was recorded in four sets of ethnographic field notes for each site visit between 2012-2018, guided by Whitehead's ethnographic framework to create "situated knowledge within the context of application" (Whitehead, 2005, p. 5). Observations and notes were recorded and later analyzed, according to the following overarching themes: the individual, social system, collectively shared beliefs, significant 'idea' systems, expressive culture, material culture, the physical environment, needs to achieve physical functioning, and shared history. Also, photographs captured a visual impression and interpretation of the research field. Participants provided permission to use the photos collected in the analysis and dissemination of this research work.

#### **4.7 Data Analysis**

Data were collected throughout the project and included field notes, interview transcriptions, mapping exercises, and photographs. Data were reviewed in several iterations as a nonlinear process, and as a continual process of looking for key themes from the data and from within the field. A series of 'thick data' are presented as detailed accounts to reveal the social context and the connections, as Wang (2013) posited that "big data delivers numbers, thick data delivers stories. Big data relies on machine learning; thick data relies on human learning" (p. 3). Once data collection was complete, an inductive process of the analysis

conducted a broad and open coding of critical issues, themes, repeated or striking ideas, key phrases, highlighted events and stories were sought from the data. This first level coding identified broad themes that were reflected in and related to the literature. Also, data and examples that did not fit within what was discussed within the literature were noted. The next iteration of coding distilled data to inform the CVA analysis (see table 5.2) to provide evidence of collectivity and identify indices of social development. The final iteration selected data and excerpts to include in the discussion and served to exemplify the key themes and findings. Throughout this process, additional field visits for data validation by the community stakeholders and participants helped to ensure that the inclusion or exclusion of topics and themes were applicable and that interpretations were appropriate. Through the data collection and analysis processes, personal reflections and relevant learning was noted.

In recognition that fieldwork and interpretation are neither objective nor replicable (Mannik & McGarry, 2017), the data collected and discussed in this work is only a partial perspective and is shaped by my positionality. Absolon & Willet (2004) discuss the ways that a writer can avoid ethnocentric writing by revealing their epistemological location. Throughout this research process and within the reflexive analysis, I identify my positionality within the research environment and respond to the research questions authentically and sincerely. Indigenous methodologies expect the researcher to change as a result of the co-construction of knowledge and seek a middle ground of understanding (Goulet & Goulet, 2014; Kovach, 2009). The reflexive process through multiple iterations of data collection, field visits, and deliberation of ‘data contemplation’ (LaValle & Sasakamoose, 2019) sought to reveal biases and ‘bend back’ the learnings from the field to extend to the Western context and a collective whole. Adopting an agile approach to the research environment encouraged me to “respond rather than react in a judgmental and rigid manner” (Allan & Arber, 2018, p. 12), while the reflexive analysis discusses changes and transformations that resulted from the relational partnerships that developed throughout the project.

#### **4.8 Research Ethics**

Approval for conducting this research was obtained from the University of Saskatchewan based on the human ethical standards from the Research Behavioural Ethics Board (REB#16-213) on July 1, 2012 and renewed annually. Ethics was amended on January 24, 2018, approving the use of the stakeholder semi-structured interview guide [Appendix C].

Consent forms were read to the girls by the research assistant, who used both English and Kiswahili to describe the project and consent process. The girls consented to participation in the research project and agreed to the use of their names and photos. The signing of the Consent and Photo Release forms was witnessed by the research assistant. Stakeholders read, reviewed, and signed the consent forms themselves, and all had strong English language skills. Signed consent forms and research data remain safely and securely stored in a locked cabinet and will remain stored until the required date of December 31, 2025. The study was closed on December 19, 2018.

#### **4.9 Research Translation and Dissemination**

The formal dissertation of this research will be available electronically online, and published papers resulting from this work will ensure the recognition of the co-creation and co-production of the participants in this work. Concerning the ownership of research data and findings, the Girls Group participants are acknowledged within this work with the permission to use their first names. Each of the ‘participants’ is a friend and living young lady. Using names is an effort to locate and relate to the girls, finding connection to their perspectives and lived environment. With consent from the girls, photos were taken, and a photo book was created to create visual imagery of the research setting and the Mama Kwanza Girls Group experience. Each participant is provided a photo book [Attachment A] in recognition of their participation and a gift of appreciation for their contributions.

#### **4.10 Limitations**

Structured interviews and, to some extent, group discussions were limited in the effort to generate quality, reportable data. The didactic formats of data collection, such as interviewing and asking direct questions, with the expectation of a complete and honest response from participants, in fact, produced low-quality data. In a relational research context, the degree of social trust and connection required between the researcher and a participant for a successful and insightful interview cannot be discounted. Power relations and cultural contexts are critical considerations when using question-and-answer research methods. In respect and recognition of the intimate act of sharing inner knowledge and lived experience, the nature of direct questioning and structured methods of knowledge production may not be as reliable or insightful compared to knowledge sharing that is unpredicted, unsolicited, or unscripted

(Mackenzie & Knipe 2006). Allowing for the unknown or unseen is critical in community-responsive research to create contextual expertise and in-depth understanding of data (Sasakamoose et al., 2017). A shift from formal interviewing and focus groups, to unstructured narratives and group conversations are essential methods for quality and ethical data collection in community and Indigenous research environments and are to be embraced (Mosse, 2005).

Although the depth and degree of data available for analysis from personal interviews and structured focus group discussions with the girls was limited, the gap was supplemented by the rich data that resulted from participatory mapping exercises and informal discussions. Discussions recounted life histories, events, concerns, and anticipations of the future for the girls. Journey mapping was the most responsive research method among the girls, where discussions were mostly unstructured and primarily led by participants themselves. Visual representative symbols of significant life events and experiences were useful to further elaborate and prompt discussions. The visual cues helped to initiate discussion and support further sources of data collection. Finding ways to document adolescent experiences and perspectives can be challenging. Although participatory mapping and visual methods have numerous methodological limitations, such as interpretation, validity, and reliability (Affleck, Glass, & Macdonald, 2013; Margolis & Pauwels, 2011), Hodes et al. (2018, p. 27) argue that “with the potential to engage adolescents directly in the research process ... participatory techniques have much to offer.”

The barrier of language is intrinsic to cross-cultural research designs. The limited ability to probe more deeply into issues and clarify with participants about topics or ideas that arose proved to be complicated. Developing an understanding of the research context and the data collection took time. Sitting together and spending time in the community and with the participants beyond points of ‘data collection’ was critical. Learning and sharing language between the researcher and the participants, both English and Kiswahili, provided the opportunity and environment to ask defining or clarifying questions and make connections between worldviews. This deeper prodding to understand across languages facilitated further co-learning through continuous clarifying and questioning of one another, including word choices and interpretation of cultural practices. The research participants themselves received English instruction, and the researcher also learned key phrases and words in Kiswahili to facilitate rudimentary communication and shared understandings. The research assistant, a



respected leader of the Girls Group, could speak exceptional English and assisted in interpretation and cross-cultural interpretation and reflection.

Sharing of vulnerabilities, such as sexual relations, family planning, interpersonal relations, health, and significant life events, are recognized as closed and personal in most cultures (Nelson, Woodward & Wysocki, 2006). As such, personal interviews occurred in a private environment with a Mama Kwanza staff member, who also served as the local research assistant and facilitator. Underreporting sensitive information was as expected, and only inside informal settings and within casual conversations did any of the girls speak about any personal or concerning issues in any depth. As such, verbatim data was not recorded during informal conversations and only a few direct quotations are available directly from the girls.

Unstructured methods, such as group discussions and personal storytelling, were led by the participants and were later recorded in field notes. Unstructured data recorded in field notes provided insightful reflections and supported findings and provide critical contextual knowledge necessary for feminist and ethnographic studies. However, unbracketed stories are a relatively new qualitative research method, which creates challenges (Kovach, 2010). Without accurately recording direct quotations, while relying on the interpretative lens of the researcher, misrepresentation may result. These research findings and discussions are limited to time and space and are subject to ongoing critique and refinement. Claims and observations are not intended as a complete representation of the community, or the lived realities of the participants.

## 5a Data and Findings: Participants

*This is the discipline of paying attention; for learning from others; for becoming more responsibly aware of inequalities; for better understanding the social forces causing suffering and how people might somehow yet find hope; and most generally, for being perpetually pulled beyond the limits of one's own taken-for-granted world.*  
(Narayan, 1993, p. 679)

### 5a.1 Girls Group Participants

The Girls Group met every day, Monday to Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for three months. The expectation was for participants to be on time with homework completed. They were supposed to cover their expenses to arrive at the program but received tea, lunch, and transportation costs home. Most girls walked to Green Hope to arrive before 9:00 a.m. and used the transportation money to catch the local transport ('*dali dala*') to their homes at the end of the day. However, it became clear that not all the girls used the transportation money for the trip home, but rather, used the extra money for other purposes in their day to day lives. The project covered additional programs and training costs. The girls completed an intake form upon registration with the Girls Group. They signed a 'Girls Group Contract' with Green Hope Organization, agreeing to the commitment to "learn, participate, respect, review, and practice the skills provided by the program." Program staff, in turn, agreed to "respect the time and learning processes of the participants, to demonstrate professional and supportive attitudes, and prepare meaningful and appropriate lesson plans and activities for participants."

Each of the girls met the program criteria by being between the ages of 15 – 25 years of age and no longer enrolled in formal education. Below are profiles and demographics of the six participating girls:

**Hilda** is a 19-year-old Christian from the Sambaa tribe. Both her parents completed secondary school and are described by Hilda as "working peasants". Hilda was one of the two girls in the Girls Group who still resided with both her parents, along with her three siblings. Just short of her final exams, Hilda did not complete Form Four – the final form or level for the completion of a secondary school diploma. Hilda did well in school and aspires to be a teacher. It seemed that school fees could be the reason she did not complete her schooling. However, she also spoke of her illness of experiencing frequent "headaches." She experienced difficulties linked to social exclusion as she described the experience that "some people ignore me." Hilda

spoke very fondly of her family and that she “enjoys her life” and that “people in my family love me so much.” Her fellow students and all her “teachers” were also described as necessary and endeared to Hilda, and she participated fully in all activities with near-fluent English language skills. Ultimately, Hilda “dreams to be a teacher”, to “teach people”, “get a good education” and “get [a] good job”. Also “a love relationship”, and “to get marriage and have three kids” are crucial to Hilda. “In my future” writes Hilda “I wanna a good life, I want to have peace and love. Also, I want a good house and to be happy in this whole world”.

**Angel** is a 16-year-old Christian from the Yyamwe tribe. She is the seventh born in a family of eight children. Her mother is a “businesswoman”, and her father is a teacher. Her highest level of education is Standard Seven, primary level. According to Angel, “my parents does not pay me my school fees, so I end at primary level.” Angel’s evident passion is fashion design and desires to be a “designer and fashionista.” Angel no longer lives with her parents because her “dad denied me” and she was required to leave home. She now lives with her aunty in Arusha, who is a nurse. She has been sick with Malaria and no longer attends school. Angel values education and writes, “I want to go to school” and also “I want to take my kids for a good education”. Angel also wants to have her own home and ‘good family’ with ‘two kids’. According to Angel, she is seeking support “because I do not have capacity” (*‘kwasababu hana uwezo’*).

**Dayana** is a 17-year-old, Christian from the Nyaturu tribe. Dayana has completed Form Two, but no longer attends school because of “conflict with my family” and “not going on with my studies and providing in my family.” After her “dad denied me,” Dayana moved to live with her aunty to help with her cousins. Dayana experienced a “sickness of eyes” and remembers a happy time when “my parents gave me a birthday party.” Dayana wants to skill train and become a businesswoman to “have a good job” and “get a good life.” Dayana eagerly engaged in all activities and practiced her English-speaking skills whenever the opportunity arose. She also was sure to complete her homework and tasks her teacher assigned. Dayana walks over an hour every day to come and join the capacity training sessions and arrives every morning before 9:00 am after tending to her “house girl work”. She also desires for the future to “have a house or a plot”, “be married” and “have three kids.”

**Hosiana** is a 17-year-old Maasai girl who completed Form One before leaving school. She is one of six children of parents who work in their own business. She moved from her parents to stay with her aunty, refusing and fleeing FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) rituals. Hosiana had a “fire accident” involving hot cooking oil, with visible scars on her face and neck. She also spoke about a recurrent chest cough. She expresses much love for her family, including her “mother, father, sisters, aunty, uncle, grandfathers, grandmothers, and brothers.” Hosiana’s desired future is to “be a teacher”, “to get married”, “good relationship”, have “four children”, to “build a nice house” and have a “good life.” Hosiana traveled a long distance to participate in the Girls Group, somewhere near two hours one way per day, on foot.

**Levina** is 16 years old and has completed Standard Seven, primary school. She is Christian from the Giia Musoma tribe. She lives with her grandmother and her father. Her father has no job, and she has six siblings. She has also “shifted to live with my aunty”, but recently “has shifted to [Arusha] and live with my grandmother”. Levina spoke of having eye problems and rashes. Levina wants “first to go to school and complete my studies” and then “build a house after working”. Her desired future included taking her “four children to school”. Levina loves her family and “wants what God has blessed me with.”

**Sion** is 17-year-old Maasai, who is yet to complete her Form Four exams as she “finished before her last year”. After a conflict with her family and the death of her grandmother, she “shifted to Arusha” and now lives with her cousins. Her “young sister got sick” with a chest cough, which costs the family “troubles”. She was happiest when she was living “in with my mother and fathers, brothers, young brother, young sisters, and grandmother”. She has five siblings. Sion spoke of wanting to “finish studies”, “get a good job after finish my studies as a nurse”. Sion’s desired future is “to have a person who loves me” and “to love all my family”. She wants “to have a good life” which includes: “good relationship”, “to get married”, “good clothes”, “good house”, “good cars”, “good food”, “good health”, with “three kids in my family”. Sion travels the furthest distance to the training program, traveling from Ngara region, which is approximately 24 KM.

## **5a.2 Participatory Mapping and Group Discussions**

Upon joining the group in June 2016, I spent time with the Girls Group, first as a participant and observer in all group activities, until the end of the session in August 2016. After a few weeks of spending time together in the Girls Group, I began to lead some of the morning

classes and used data-gathering activity methods in some of the sessions. All participants of the Girls Group agreed to participate in the research activities and signed consent and photo release forms. The project was explained as ‘*pamoja*’ with an understanding that there was an opportunity to develop a group initiative or business that could contribute to their capacity building as part of the Girls Group programming. The Mama Kwanza project funding provided the micro-lending funds for a group initiative collectively developed by the participants. Efforts were made to identify a joint initiative that could be designed to meet the shared goal of the group. Participants were probed about the willingness and interest to engage in a joint venture, who that might involve, and what activities could take place. The data mapping activities and discussion extended over several Girls Group sessions from June – August 2016.

### **5a.2.1 Journey Mapping Results**

The Journey Maps were somewhat difficult to describe to the girls. The maps were all constructed linear, with a clear division between what has happened in the past and the future ahead. This depiction of their life journey was likely influenced by the example and description of the activity by the research assistant and me. The research assistant clarified the activity with a lengthy description in Kwashili. There was a mutual understanding of the progression of the life journey, and the stories were presented in sequential events. The visual representation of the events and the layout of the map was largely replicated according to the example of my own Journey Map. There was a clear understanding of what each of the symbols embodied:



**Happy events** included birthday parties and elements of the ‘good life’ including ‘house’, ‘job’, family’, ‘marriage’, ‘children’, ‘health’, ‘good food’, the ‘love of God’, and ‘respect’.



**Sad events** included: ‘conflict with family’, ‘not going on with my studies’, ‘eye problems’, ‘fire accident’, ‘headaches’, ‘grandmother died’, ‘dad denied me’, ‘father denied me’, ‘did not go to school’, ‘not going on with my studies and providing for the family’.



**Illnesses** were noted including ‘cough’, ‘chest cough’, ‘rashes’, ‘malaria’, ‘sickness of eyes’, ‘my young sister was sick’.



**Births** included their own, the birth of siblings, and desired births of children for themselves in the future. Deaths included ‘grandmother’.



**Educational** attainment was noted, often including the primary and/or secondary school name. The school symbol was included in each of the future journey for each girl.



**Home** symbol identified living situations and locations, including when and where the girls ‘shifted’ from one home to another home. Alternative homes were always within the same family, and two of the girls remained with their mother and father in the family home.



**Love** was symbolized by ‘mother’, ‘brothers’, ‘sisters’, ‘grandmother’, ‘father’, ‘peace’, ‘someone who loves me’, ‘children’, ‘my studies’, ‘my teachers’, ‘want what God blesses me with’, and ‘loving my family’.

Every Journey Map included ‘education’ and ‘employment’ within the scope of a preferred future. Children and marriage were also anticipated by every girl. Most employment was commonly envisioned as a shop or business owner, and in addition, three girls desired to become a teacher, nurse, and fashion designer. All future events on the Journey Maps were hopeful, including love, education, housing, and money to support a ‘good life.’

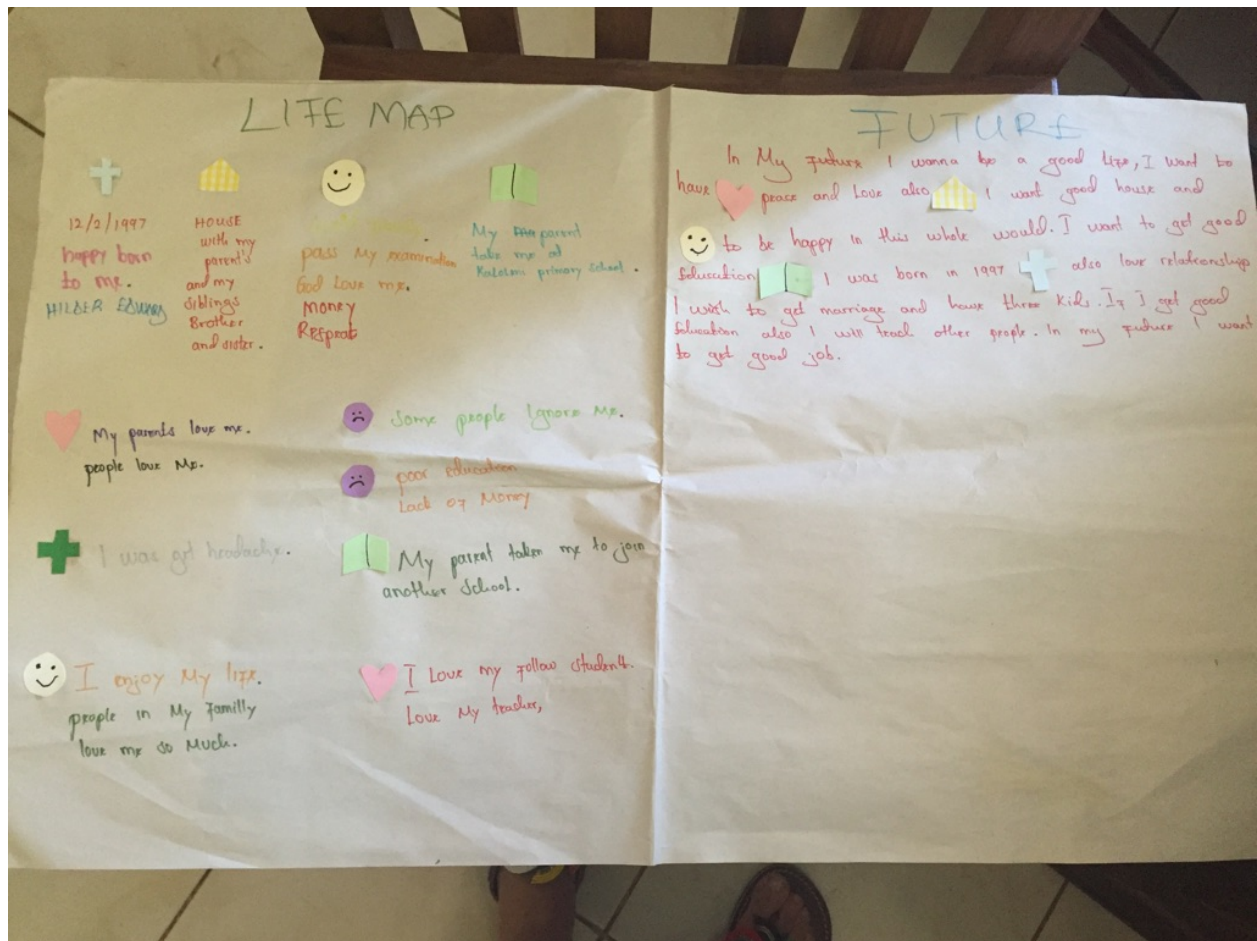


Figure 5-1 – #1 Journey Map

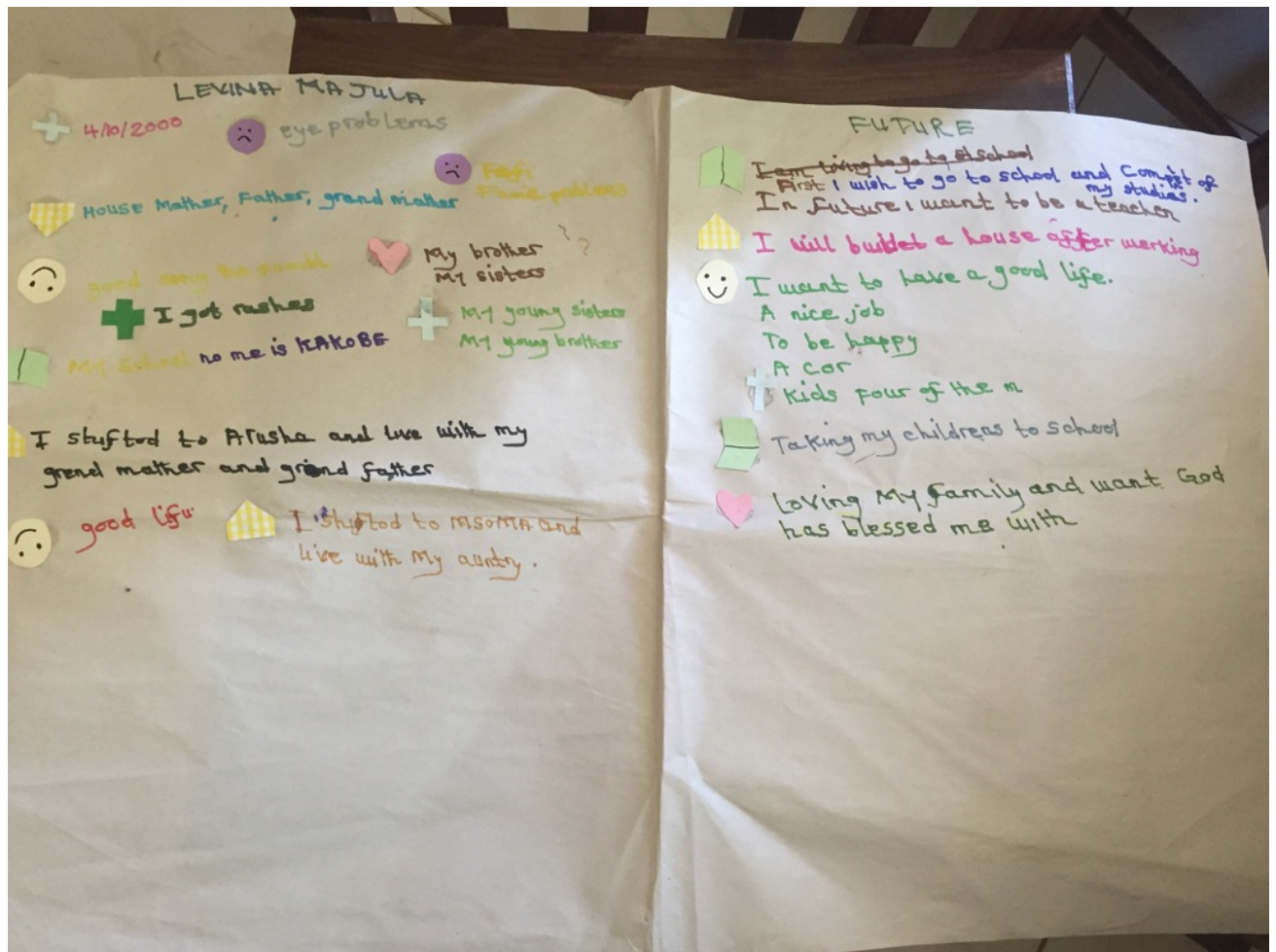


Figure 5-2 – #2 Journey Map



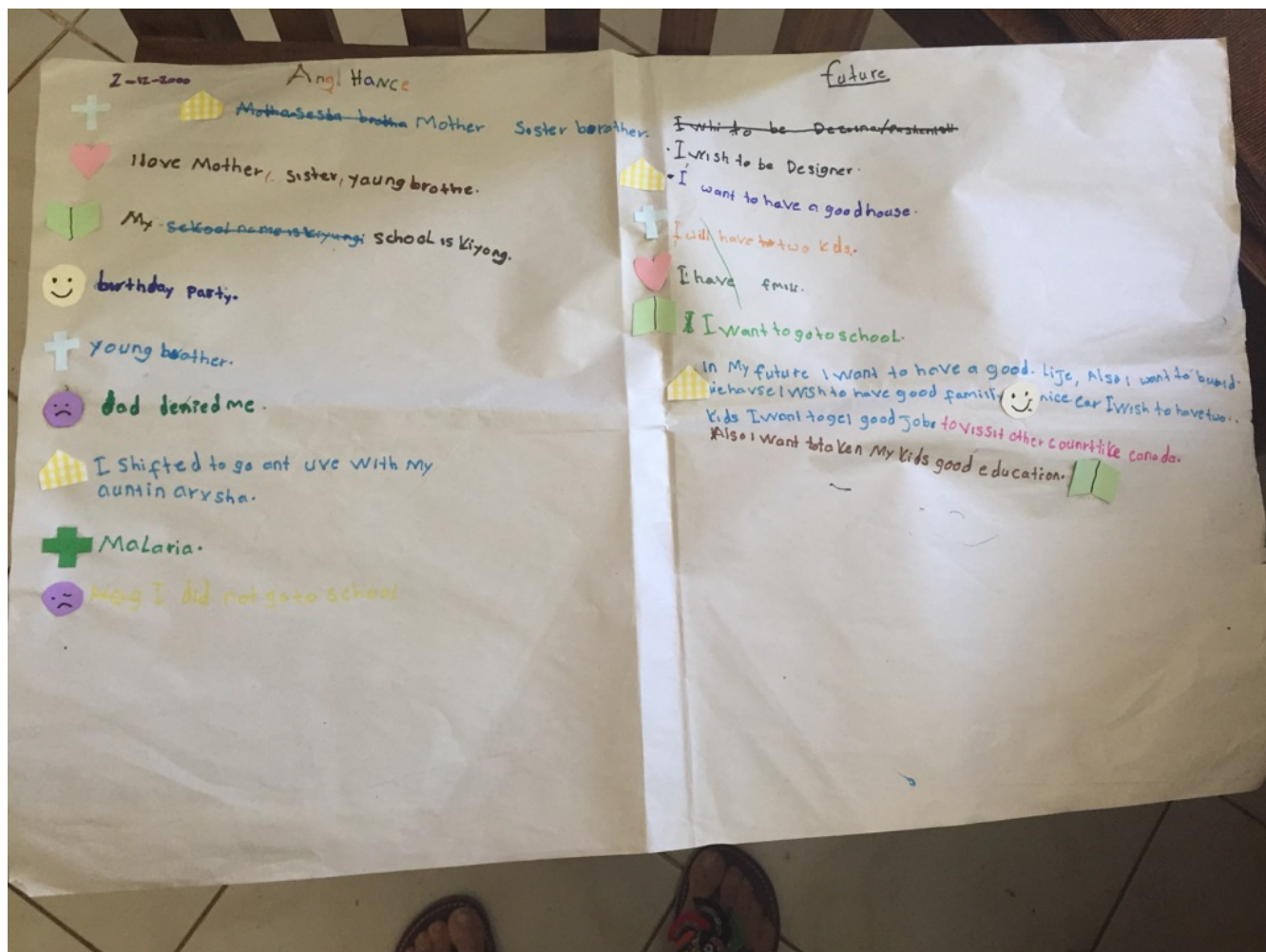


Figure 5-3 – #3 Journey Map

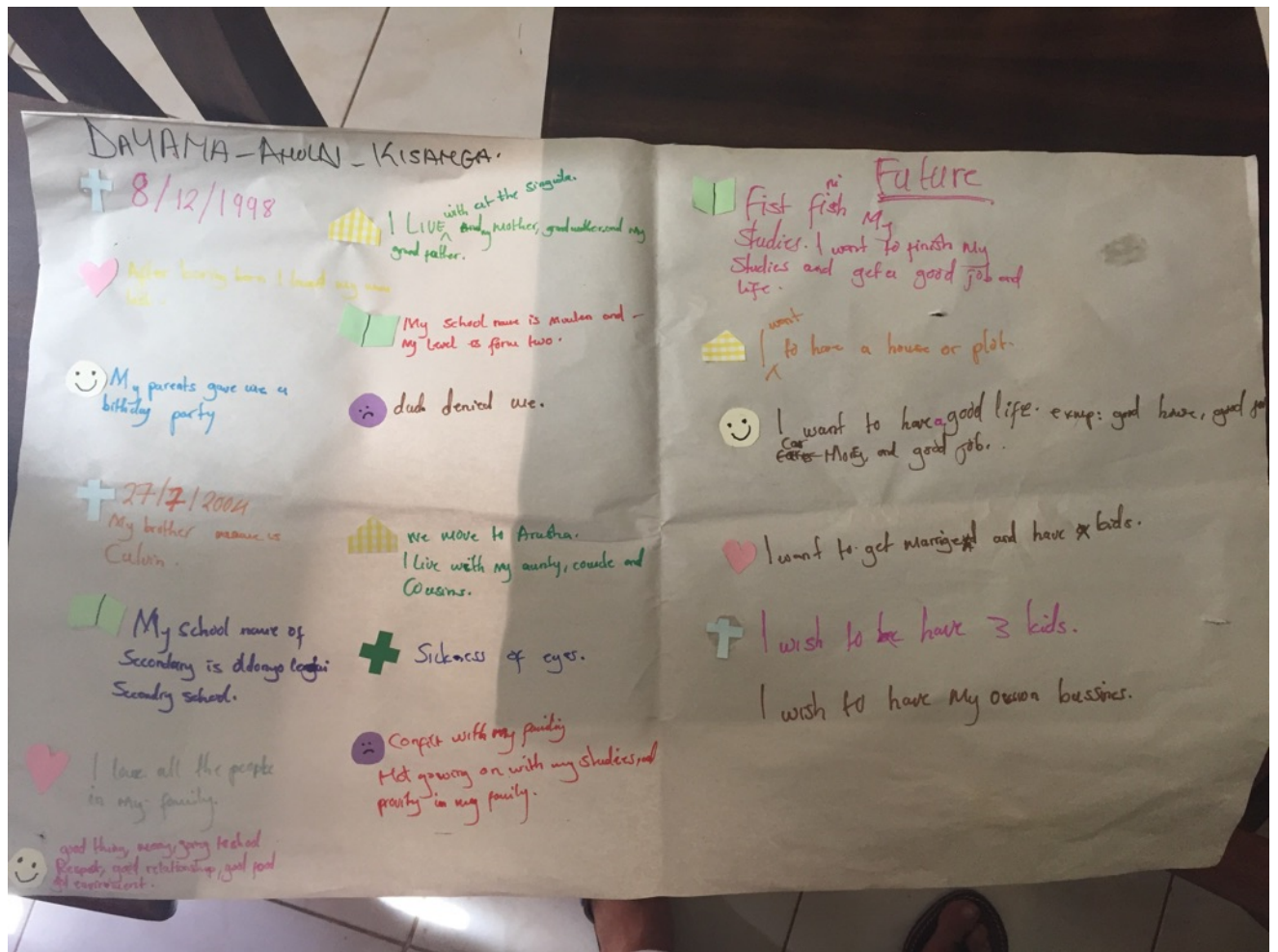


Figure 5-4 – #4 Journey Map

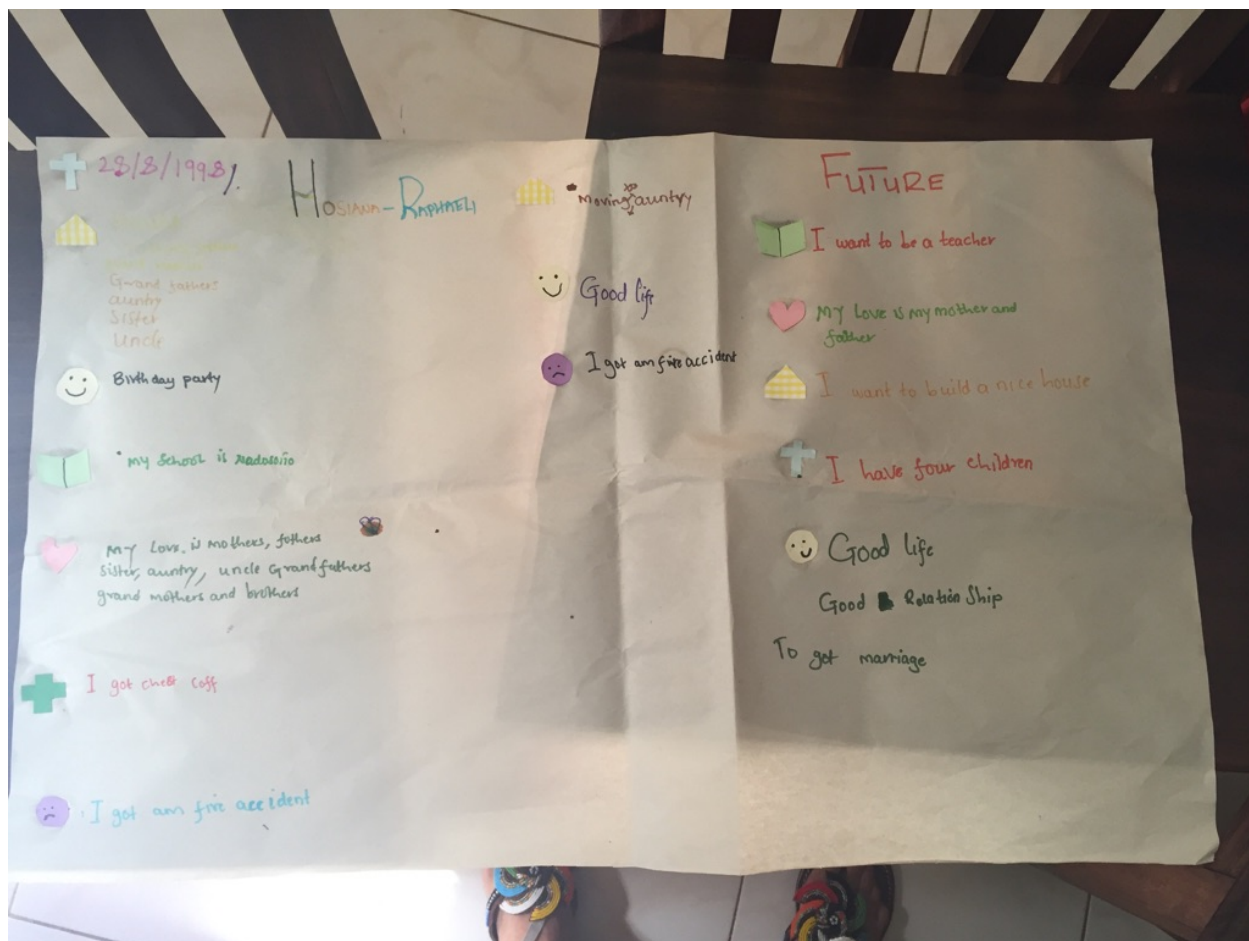


Figure 5-5- #5 Journey Map



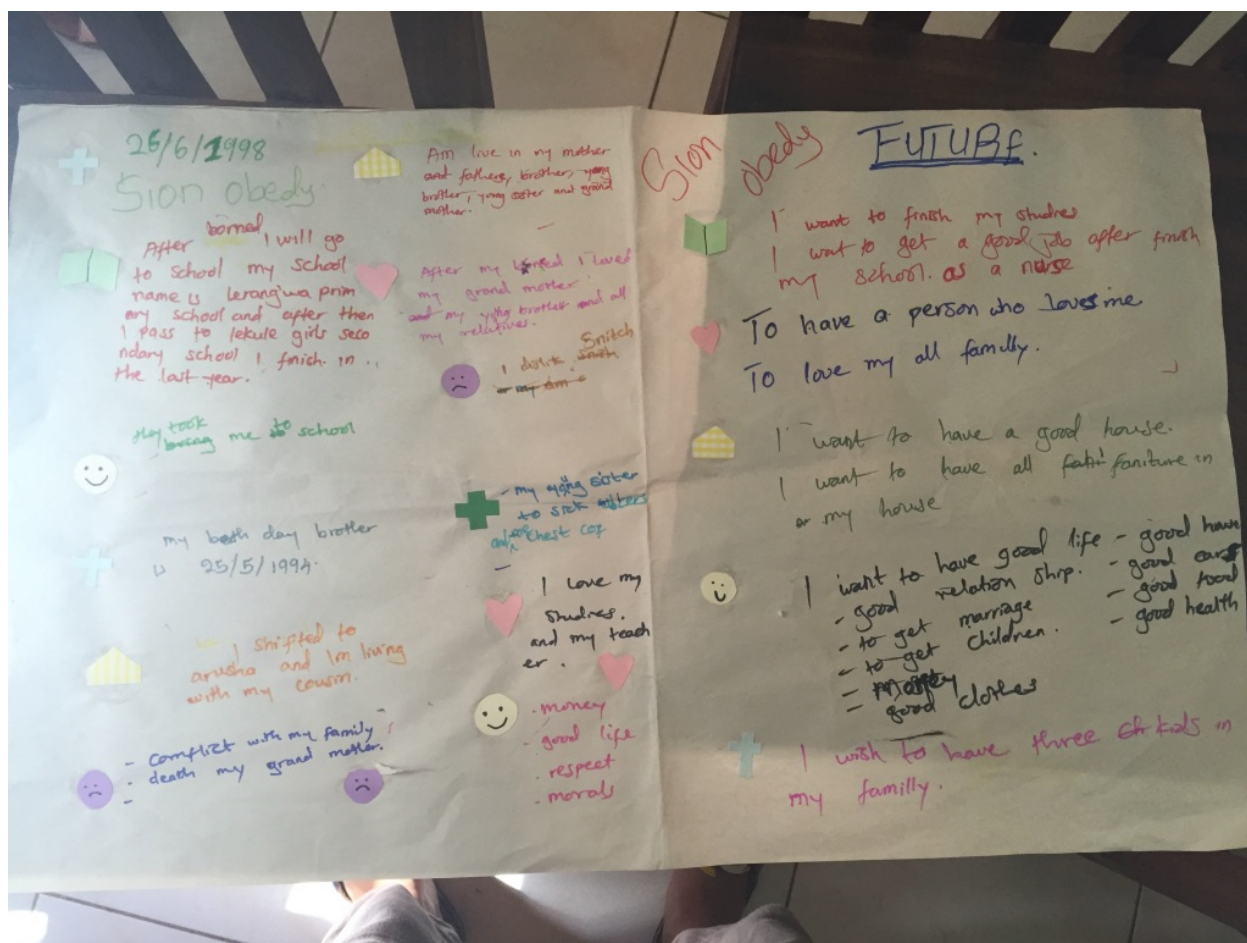


Figure 5-6 – #6 Journey Map

### 5a.2.2 Mind Mapping discussions

In group discussions and a mind mapping activity of the ‘Good Things’ and ‘Priorities’ in life, the girl’s responses revealed four main spheres:

- Money (‘job’, ‘good food’, ‘nice house’, ‘nice clothes’);
- Education (‘study’, ‘school’, ‘better job’);
- Relationships (‘marriage’, ‘children’, ‘good relations’, ‘family’); and
- Morals (‘respect’, ‘God’, ‘help others’, ‘morals’).

When discussing and mapping the ‘Challenges’ or ‘Difficulties’ in life, the girls identified the following:

Table 5a-01

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| • Conflict        | • Embarrassment |
| • Family problems | • FGM           |
| • Low education   | • Exclusion     |
| • Sickness        | • Poverty       |
| • Death           |                 |

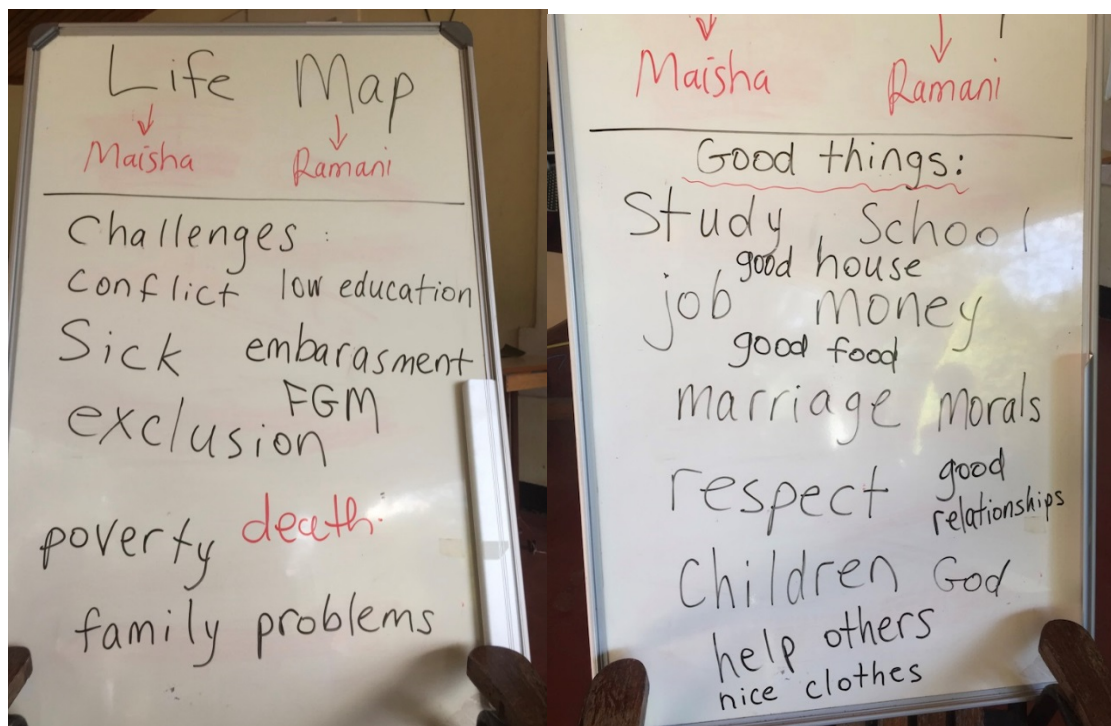


Figure 5-7 - Mind Mapping of Capacities and Vulnerabilities

While the journey and mind mapping activities were occurring, the group discussed their strengths, interests, and skills, and talked about goals in life in conversations revolving around the questions: ‘what would you do if you could do anything?’ and ‘if you could have anything, what would it be?’ The girls identified several shared skills and interests, such as doing hair, dancing, singing, wanting a business, and learning computers. One girl mentioned that she liked to “play basketball” and another wished to be a “fashion designer or shop owner.” Some said they would like to visit other countries, like Canada. When asked if they could have anything, what would it be, all the girls said that they would “go to school”. All said that they would “get a job” or “become a good businessperson.” All of the girls identified children and marriage, while two specifically identified they wanted a ‘*mzungo*’ or “white man.” A lively discussion pursued, in which the group discussed the difference and similarities between white and black husbands.

*Speaking with authority, she claims, like a fact, that ‘white men don’t cheat’. ‘They aren’t like black men – white men want to be married and want to stay married. They only have one woman’. A laugh, out loud, slips out of me. So abrupt that all eyes turn my way. Wide eyes. I must clarify to my friends that white men indeed do cheat. I describe that, from my experience, there are ‘stayers’ and ‘strayers’ among men ... a pause, and the conversation circles back*

*to – how to find a white man to marry.*

*-Field note, August 17, 2016*

### **5a.2.3 Spatial Movement Mapping**

Contrary to a digital social network shared in Western countries, the Social Network Map for the girls from the Girls Group involved physical social connection with others. Social interactions and pathways were mapped through daily movement patterns. The Social Network Mapping most clearly illustrated the long distances the girls travel, primarily by foot, on a daily basis. The scope, range, and distance of their regular patterns varied considerably for each girl. Four of the girls had very active social patterns, while two of the girls did not diverge from their daily routine. All six girls lived in different parts of Arusha city, with two main points of connection – Mama Kwanza clinic and Green Hope Organization. Three of the girls ‘passed by’ the same marketplace, and two of the girls went to the same ‘*cha cha*’ (dance club). Four of the girls identified the Mama Kwanza health clinic as a place they go for health services, and the ‘Arusha Clock Tower’ is central in the city and was a common central location among the girls. One of the girls identified only Green Hope, church, the market, and home as the scope of travel. Another girl identified only two points of travel, her auntie’s house and Green Hope, and that sometimes her aunt tells her ‘to go places’ but she could not identify where this may be on the map. Sion and Hosiana, both from Maasai tribes, traveled lengthy distances, beyond the boundaries of the map, to arrive ‘home.’

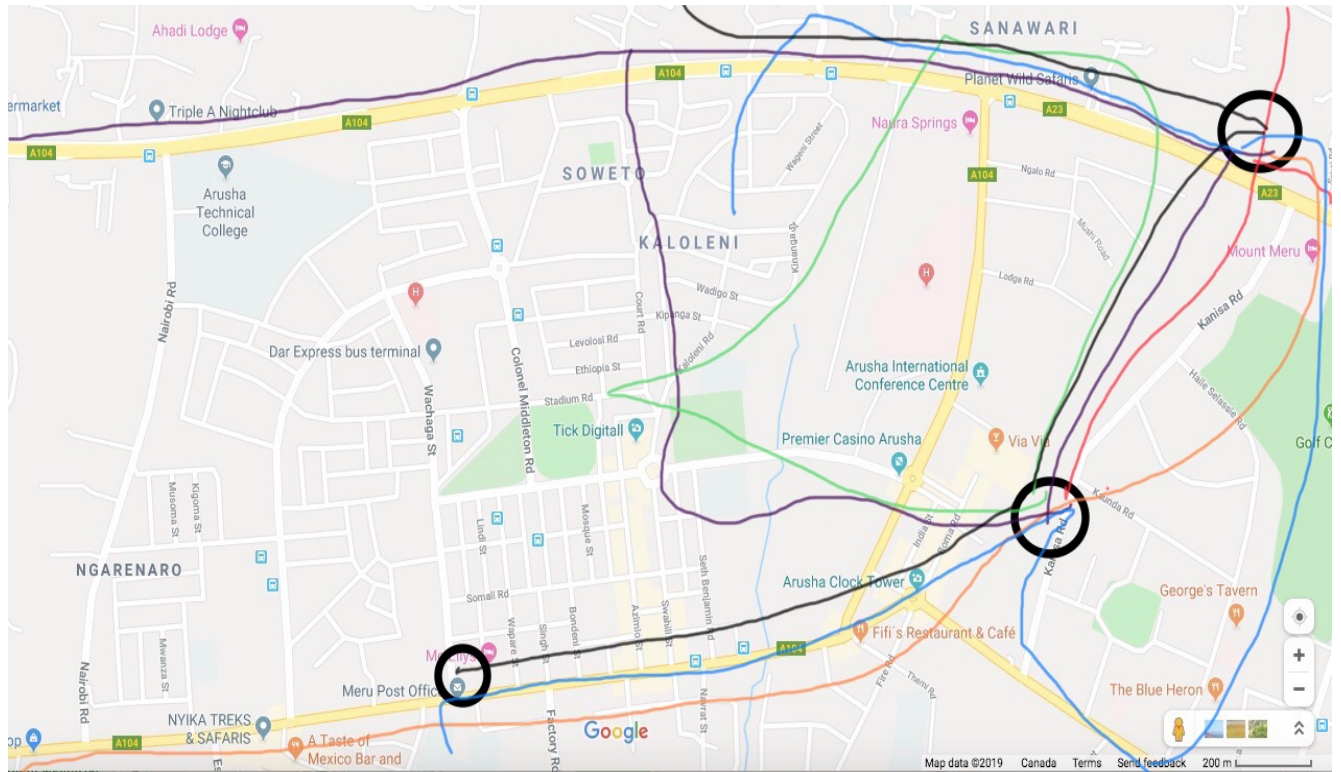


Figure 5a-8 Spaghetti Map daily mobility patterns

## **5b. Data and Findings: Context and Stakeholders**

*Qualitative research itself provides an important long-run perspective on the issues that we face on a day-to-day basis.*

*(Reason & Bradbury, 2001, p.6)*

### **5b.1 Capacity and Vulnerabilities Analysis**

The CVA analysis is presented in the tables that follow below which identify the capacities and vulnerabilities of the Mama Kwanza girls. The data for this analysis was gathered from participant observation, field notes, and stakeholder interviews, supplemented by participant data. Furthering Anderson and Woodrow's (1998) approach, data supporting each of the analytical spheres (1) physical, (2) social and organizational, and (3) attitudinal and motivational were further grouped into themes to convey an interpretation of the girls' lives along these three spheres. Data groups were then further refined into sub-sections to distinguish strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats relating to the girls' qualitative experiences and observations within each of the three spheres, in terms of capacities and vulnerabilities. Following the tables, illustrations, evidence, and data that demonstrate characteristics for each sphere are presented and discussed.



Table 5b-01 CVA Matrix of Adolescent Girls Not In School in Arusha, Tanzania – August, 2016

<b>Table 1: Physical Resources</b> <i>(includes land, climate, environment, where people live, housing, hazards, infrastructure, access to technology, finance, food and water security, access to resources and capital, skills, labor, assets, physical health)</i>			
Capacities		Vulnerabilities	
<b>Strengths:</b>  Demographic – Youthful, approaching adulthood, single with no children  Skill development – Primary level education, skills development program, access to micro loans  Communication - Access to technology/ internet, and mobile phone  Health services – reproductive health information, primary health care, support services/NGOs  Location – Urban based, housed with family  Social fabric – human capital, social capital	<b>Opportunities:</b>  Monetary – Micro-lending for business development  Professional development – Skills training and support; access to tools/goods/information  Supports: Shared labor and skills; Support services  Teachings: learning about reproductive health and sexual rights; business development; literacy	<b>Weaknesses:</b>  Housing – Unstable/transitioning housing, over-crowding, walk long distances  Infrastructure – Limited electricity, limited and hazardous infrastructure  Social role – Detachment from parental figures, mentors, and role models, over labored (home chores, care giving, food preparation, etc.) manual, repetitive tasks  Economic insecurity – employment scarcity, no income sources,  Employability – Limited education, illiteracy (reading, digital, health), limited refined marketable skills, limited English, developing skillsets  Health & nutrition- No family planning practices, chronic health concerns, food insecurity,	<b>Threats:</b>  Health – Conditions requiring medical services, malnutrition  Sexual health – Early pregnancy and complications, FGM  Dependency:  Economic- Sporadic/ no income sources, perpetuation of poverty  Protection – Long distances travelled alone, physical safety and security, Gender based violence  Poor education – Poor cognition, Physically hard work  Instability – ‘Shifts’ in housing; marginalization  Advocacy – Limited political representation

Table 5b-02 CVA Matrix of Adolescent Girls Not In School in Arusha, Tanzania – August, 2016

<b>Table 2: Social and Organizational Resources</b> <i>(relations and organization among people, social fabric of society, formal cultural and political structures, and informal norms and practices, decision making, establish leadership, organization of social and economic activities, getting things done, division of labor and assets, decision making and agency capacity, prejudice, conflict, social divisions, segregation, stratification, social coping systems and supports, family and community systems, government and organizational services)</i>			
Capacities		Vulnerabilities	
<b>Strengths:</b> Socialist roots -Ujamaa basis, minimal social stratification Relational based society – Relations based social structure, proximity to others, family-based loyalty, preservation of the familial unit, social supports Oral tradition – knowledge, expressive culture, tradition and shared histories Religious and moral foundations – time honored norms and practices, protection and value of children, physical touch and connection, terms of endearment Education – informal skills among men and women, receptivity to other ways of knowing and doing Access to human and women’s rights advocacy across sectors, maternal and child health supports, diverse NGOs and CBOs	<b>Opportunities:</b> Social participation and engagement, social connections and networks, shared realities, cohort grouping, trust systems Access to resources and information Targeted programs Delayed pregnancies Gender Equity laws	<b>Weaknesses:</b> Expectation/desire for marriage and many children Limited life choices, rigid social and cultural practices, high dependency compliant and subservient, devalued work, sheltered worldview, survival mode existence, extended family demands, demanding expectations Strict gender-based roles, male dominated, preferential treatment of boys/men Unquestioning /naivety, silenced voices Limited planning or long-term decision-making frameworks, without future planning/ orientation Gender-based violence, FGM and sexual rights violations Property laws, education laws, human rights law, inaccessible government services	<b>Threats:</b> Resistance to challenges to the status quo Resistance to change of practices and norms Social isolation, alienation, exclusion Conflict and gender-based violence Open use of violent and strict disciplinary measures

Table 5b-03 CVA Matrix of Adolescent Girls Not In School in Arusha, Tanzania – August, 2016

<b>Table 3: Attitudinal and Motivational Resources</b> <i>(cultural and psychological factors, religion, morals, dependency, histories, life experiences, teachings, learnings, expectations, survival strategies, resiliency, ideologies, beliefs, experiences of collaboration, views on ability to create change, sense of agency, sense of purpose, feelings of empowerment, autonomy, self-determination)</i>			
Capacities		Vulnerabilities	
<b>Strengths:</b> <p>Strong moral compass, foundation of hope and faith</p> <p>Greetings and expressive culture, joy in life (joie de vie), contentment</p> <p>Community conscious, families and extended relationships are tightly knit</p> <p>High degree of respect and protection of culture and tradition</p> <p>Women's rights increasingly understood as human rights, increased discussions about women and sexual rights</p> <p>Education and training programs established</p> <p>Perseverance, resilience</p> <p>Collective society/global mindset, deep care for one another, foundation of mutual support and cooperation, cluster together in groups, social inclusion and networks</p>	<b>Opportunities:</b> <p>Opportunities with NGOs and CBOs through supportive funding</p> <p>Traditional care structures within the culture and in the social fabric, natural groupings and gathering, availability of peers with shared realities and a common purpose,</p> <p>Cooperation and mutual support embedded in the political and social cultures,</p>	<b>Weaknesses:</b> <p>Expectation for many children, lack of sexual rights</p> <p>Inferiority of women, ascribed status</p> <p>Devaluation of contribution and role, gender-based violence</p> <p>Limitations on drive and aspiration,</p> <p>future orientation or planning (continuous living), resources (scarcity), aspiration for change</p> <p>Focus on daily living, survival coping individualistic greed, crisis driven, reactive (not proactive)</p> <p>Not decision makers, passive/ complacent, futility, poorly informed, limited questioning of practices or critical thinking skills</p> <p>Limited developed self-efficacy, high dependency</p> <p>Property and inheritance laws</p>	<b>Threats:</b> <p>Narrowly regarded and defined by reproductive capacity</p> <p>At risk for early pregnancy and disease</p> <p>Limited belief in change, non-inspired</p>

### **5b.1.2 Physical Capacities and Vulnerabilities**

Physically, the girls of the Mama Kwanza Girls Group are typical adolescent girls. With youth on their side, these young women have access to technology and mobile phones, have ‘selfies’ down to an art and are always ready to strike a pose when the camera appears:

*Six girls. After introducing themselves, their subtle qualities quickly emerged – a couple of obvious leaders and a couple of shy quiet observers – all true teenagers with cell phones, playlists, giggles, and honest questions (‘how old are you?’, ‘where are your children’). -- Field note, August 5, 2016*

The girls always are groomed and clean; however, mixed and matched the style may be. Moreover, individual expression is seen not only in material style, but also in interests and natural skills and abilities:

*The Nani Nani markets – a farmer’s market and annual celebration. So much engagement from the girls – again, unique to their individuality. Some interested, keenly, in greenhouse growing. Others, in solar technology. Some, rather all in the shops and trinkets – wanting and wishing. And one drawn into the banking and finance booths, lingering in one booth for a very long time, while the rest of the group waited, as a whole, passing the time, snapping selfies, sitting around, waiting. Waiting. – Field note, August 11, 2016*

The girls are urban-based and unmarried. None has children. They are no longer in school and are required to make decisions about providing for their basic needs and ‘getting a job.’ The girls are all trying to meet basic needs, including food security and housing. The living situations were discussed by the girls as ‘for now’ by all the girls, and all were working to meet immediate concerns: “some of them come from far away and don’t have any money – not even anything to eat” SK#1. The girls are physically dependent on others to help provide for their basic needs and will live with family or relatives until they either go away to school, get married, or ‘shift’ to live with other family or friends.

The time and work demand of household tasks, particularly for adolescent girls, keeps people busy, moving all day to meet provisional needs. This demand is even more so for the girls who are living with relatives, where they contribute substantially to household tasks, “taking care for cousins”, to “go get things”, or any other expectations and demands for their stay. Ultimately, the girls can and do hard and difficult work which keeps them from doing other things:

*There are two in this group who are very good and smart but have no money but has good marks – when she comes here we can see that she is smart so we have to*

*find a way to send her back to school or she will just stay home and this is not good SK#2*

Added challenges include the time burdens of transportation and long walks between points on the difficult and challenging terrain of stone, dirt, debris, and the overall time it takes to move through space with limited infrastructure.

*The van turns – down a road paved by people. A road that has seen few vehicles and fewer rubber wheels. A road that gets narrower and rougher. Deeper and deeper. Into the trees, the people, lives within, life beyond the streets I have been. As the road becomes more precarious, a motorcycle meets us to guide us the rest of the way. To Dayana's house. I have been invited for dinner. I come by car. She travels this road by foot. This is her daily path. She waits at home for me to arrive. Through streets designed for feet. The presence of the car turns heads and brings children out to see. At last, when I am sure there is no further a car could travel, we park tightly next to a wall. With a door. The door opens and reveals a whole world of families. Living side by side. Door by door. Space in the middle where life is shared. Behind the walls, is life. Dayana is waiting – bright and excited – to bring me in. – Field note, August 25, 2016.*

*We travel home, through the trees. Road hardly can be seen. People are everywhere. But hard to see. Without the headlights shining our way, it would be black. Completely black. When the sun goes down, and there is no fire, it is black on the land and among the people. Perhaps a glimmer of light over there, easily seen, otherwise it is black. As far as the eyes can reach. Without the headlights, it is difficult to see the many people, still moving from here to there. Just like me, heading home after spending time with our peers. But without the headlights, I cannot even see. – Field note, August 25, 2016.*

*Timeliness and attendance were an issue as they were often traveling long distances to attend. SK#4*

Either by foot or by car, only so many tasks can be accomplished in a day. Things do not happen quickly, and patience is essential:

*An 11-hour safari.  
 Facing backward and behind  
 the back of a  
 Land Cruiser.  
 Watching the African  
 rural life & land  
 pass by.  
 Ever-changing.  
 Always the same.  
 Reflecting on the  
 the life that lives  
 in the red dirt  
 under the grass roofs  
 fire for light.  
 Bumps in the road.  
 Hold on tight.  
 Stop checks.  
 Armed guards.  
 Flashlights.*

*On we go.  
 On our way.  
 Tire flattened.  
 Corner stop.  
 Brother to brother.  
 To brother to brother.  
 A piece of wire  
 and a piece of something other.  
 “That should do it”.  
 “Good, good”.  
 Back on the dusty road  
 Pressing forward  
 Bumps toss bodies  
 to and fro.  
 Until we arrive  
 from across the land  
 now face to face  
 in front of the green door.  
 We are home.  
 -Field note, July 12, 2012*

*This environment is so brutal. The enemy in so many ways. Sometimes I feel so much love for this land, other times, very little. The odds are stacked. The threat to life is everywhere. Yet, the smiles are bright. The eyes shine. Faith is strong and the bodies – they move to music like there is fluid in their bones. There is a natural ease that is shared between and within all. My fellow Western travelers declare ‘I can’t dance’. They can’t because they don’t because they won’t. Comfort zones protecting us from allowing the unknown. Even if we want to try, we can’t even begin – Field note, August 11, 2016*

The immediate vulnerability of the girls is related to limited resources, including having no income nor opportunities for employment.

*then comes to other needs, for pocket money. You can really see that there is not reasonable share of food at the table so this youth will always look to see how to get an extra part of their basic meals. SK#3*

There are limited government resources and services, and the girls identified that they did not know of any, nor use any government supports. However, there is a diverse and vast range of NGOs providing independent programs and services, some targeting adolescent girls. “Mama Kwanza” and “organizations” were identified as places the girls go when in need. These service groups are a channel for resources, skill and capacity building, and marketable skills for the population. NGOs play an essential role within the local context and are critical players for the

foreseeable future. Linking and informing youth of the services available is a significant gap that requires attention.

*A challenge is income. Only about 20% of youth that graduated primary school go to secondary school; therefore, 80% are left on the street with basic education... so the role of training comes in. We [Green Hope Organization] are in the position to capture more than 60% who do not make it anywhere. SK#3*

The Mama Kwanza capacity building initiative targeted skill-building programming to help the girls develop marketable skillsets that could leverage employment or business start-up:

*We tried to address the lack of income opportunities in the Girls Group program focused on vocational skills – cooking, tailoring, marketing, bookkeeping – the girls have a chance to have their own business. Some successful, about 60%, the rest 40% are still working on figuring it out. SK#3*

*...teach them cooking, laptop and computers, clothes, if they are broken they can fix, make shangas, to make the money, to teach the English, health education especially for the girls the sexual issues, menstruation, food, wash hands. SK#2*

*Skills such as safe food handling, tailoring/sewing, word processing, simple crafts like card making and beading were evident. They seemed to excel at the practical capacities. SK#4*

*We give them training on computers, resume writing, job interviewing, and entrepreneurship (through Gola for the entrepreneurship). SK#4*

*The intention is to build foundation. We ask everyone what they like. Then they can do that. Then we can give you what you need to help yourself. Can continue to do that. There are things like – they don't have any skills. They just want to get money. SK#1*

Training opportunities were an option for some:

*For some it was the opportunity to build a skill set that made them marketable. SK#4*

*In some cases, some needs were met or at least addressed. They were given skills that were desperately needed at the practical end. They were able to expand their knowledge and linkages. SK#4*

*[she] did something good because after they went to someplace to work and then they go and make food themselves in a small hotel. She has money now, and her kids are there with her. She has a brain. Another girl has a salon. It is for herself, and she is not working for someone. SK#2*

Going back to school was an identified priority for all of the girls, secondary to getting a job or skill training. However, government restrictions made it difficult or not possible for the girls to return to school:

*Many wanted to return to school- this was not within our mandate or goal, but efforts were made – however within the TZ policy they were limited (until the last group) to even gain re-entry. So some of the not meeting was misaligned expectations or dreams – some is policy restrictions – some was the resources were limited within the program to move beyond SK#4*

A lack of primary education creates a deepening vulnerability for the girls. Many of the girls were illiterate:

*There is an issue of literacy which was far beyond the scope of this project. It is something the government is going to have to address on a broader level as it takes long periods to develop these capacities. SK#4*

Literacy levels also linked to understanding and cognitive capacities. Critical thinking is not only crucial for problem-solving difficult situations, but also in daily interactions and life choices. Discussions and problem-solving with the girls were maintained at a basic level. For instance, the most accessible and achievable imagined future for the girls appeared to be to start a business. However, there is a clear need for training in business development and planning for a business to be sustainable. The girls were challenged to imagine what to consider in establishing a business, and the planning required to maintain the business. The very process of discussing the logistics and details was education and provided learning that may inform further decisions, desires, and directions for the girls. The discussion itself was a knowledge exchange and ‘capacity building’ exercise. The didactic learning structure of the education system does not, in itself, encourage or promote critical or creative, inspired, or insightful thinking:

*Girls Group, week three. Although unwell, I would not miss my chance to spend time with these girls. 9:00 am. One girl is waiting. An hour later, all but one girl is present. I sit and watch them interact – like typical teenage girls – giggling, chatting, primping each other – somewhat oblivious to me, exchanging in the privacy of their own language. I enjoy watching them, such close, affectionate interaction and exchange of secret knowing. Ah. But then the teacher arrives and assumes the authority. One of the girls is cross-examined as to where the missing girl is. Requested, nay, demanded to call her, find her, find out why she is not present. Finally, without our last girl, once the teacher releases the point, class begins. I quickly begin to understand why the environment is tough, ruthless. They are set up to fail. Trick questions. Name-calling. Demeaning accusations. Threats of bringing in ‘the stick’. The time is short, but eternal. Painful. Painful to watch. Painful to experience. Even those who have easily conversed with me in English fail to reply to the questions correctly. The one most able, barely breathes words through her lips. Barely audible. Scared to be wrong. Nervous. I can easily see and understand the disempowering nature and impact of this strict hierarchical structure of the social and educational system. – Field note, August 11, 2016.*



The Mama Kwanza program provided training and education on healthy choices and practices, including reproductive services, personal hygiene, and nutrition. This knowledge is critical for these adolescent girls, who demonstrated minimal knowledge about the reproductive system, in turn, leaving them at high risk for contracting STIs, early pregnancy, and related complications. Moreover, malnutrition is commonplace, and diverse diets were neither common nor an identified priority to the girls. However, knowledge and training about underlying health determinants were impactful for girls and very much appreciated. Health services, hygiene products, and information were also available to the girls through the Mama Kwanza clinics:

*The other need that always comes into my face out be the need for health services. They have to pay, and they come here with malaria looking for help. SK#3*

*We provide a number of resources – I always provide 1 or 2 lectures on safer choices and women’s health. The organization is about women first so that is an important component. Our intent was to build capacities in these young women so they were employable and healthy. SK#4*

*Youth-friendly services and access to information without being judges or some notions about them. You contract an STI here, most will look at you negatively, even the health care providers themselves. The government has been trying to educate providers regarding that. SK#3*

*Access to female hygiene products is a challenge here. The girls will stay at home during those days and missing school every month. Times that by 12 months a year tells you that they become vulnerable to dropping out and then becoming more desperate. SK#3*

In terms of physical vulnerabilities, such as health, training, employment options, and knowledge, the Mama Kwanza program offers support services and resources, including conversations of other ways to do things, and safer, choices:

*In terms of healthier choices, we provided condoms, free birth control, menstrual products, and a number of personal items. They were provided with free health services and we assisted when health costs were encountered outside our program. So that need was met or even exceeded. SK#4*

*Many small successes in areas such as hygiene, and better feeding of their children (less childhood illnesses) no additional pregnancies during their involvement with the group. As for an individual level, we did have a couple of girls get employment in tailoring. SK#4*

### **5b.1.3 Social and Organization Capacities and Vulnerabilities**

The social sphere is the most predominant feature of Tanzanian society. The social fabric is structured on strong family-based relations, where people are referred to in terms of the

relationship with each other. Women's names are replaced with her husband's or referred to as the mother of her children ('Mama Robert' - Mother of Robert, 'Mama Jane' - Mother of Jane), and everyone, even strangers, is greeted as 'brother', 'sister', or 'mama'. People's lives are socially dense, and social interactions are constant. The loyalty and responsibility for your extended family are all-encompassing and remaining within that safety net is crucial. When asked, "where do you go for help?", every girl said "family."

Tanzania is a society with a rigid social structure but limited social stratification, whereby there are very few who 'eat well' while the rest are merely trying to secure daily sustenance. The whole day is devoted to gathering the resources for that one daily meal. Within the social strata, a rigid social status system determined by norms, roles, gender, position, prestige, networks, and relationships persists.

*The crowd organizes, 500 deep, for all to see. A rock was thrown if you need to know you are not in your row. Even the young boys, now sitting in a mass, are governed by a long man with a seemingly longer stick which waves and slices the air, sometimes to find a boy at the end of it, other times, just a threat. Like a man herding sheep, this man herds the boys. Bodies moving, unconsciously as the man with the stick comes near. -Field note, July 31, 2016*

Simply due to their social position as females, the girls have little decision-making power, high dependency, limited opportunity to think independently, but much encouragement to be quiet, subservient, unquestioning, and compliant:

*Most of Tanzania is male-dominated... you will find this all over. Whenever the girls don't have the chances you find more issues because of the norms and cultural factors that affect them. One issue has been an uneven distribution of roles between girls and boys which affects girls more compared to boys and has pushed the girls to be most vulnerable - for example, they have less time to worry about themselves because they are almost 24 hours occupied with home chores and the children and washing dishes in most tribes and clearing and cooking and fetching for water and woods, taking care of the ill and at home - by the time you notice you have 3-4 hours to sleep. What time is there to worry about educational matters? SK#3*

*The shaking of the old man's head to say 'no'. For better or worse, even the young female doctor retracts and abides. - Field note, July 27, 2016*

*Two, obviously important community women entered and shut the door behind them, gazing, analyzing these two foreign women. After what seems like many moments and thought loops, the two women get busy on us two white women, unwrapping and rewrapping the meters and meters of fabric over our bodies and*

*head, reaching into the bag of fabric for more wrapping and wrapping some more. When it feels like no further wrapping is possible, they nod and open the van door. We shuffle ourselves, trying to move in the mountain of fabric down one small, but a giant step down from the van. More meet us there, encircle us, pulling, tugging, covering and hiding any piece and glimpse of flesh that dares to appear. The movement is difficult as the fabric moves around my body, trying to find a secure place to rest, when one kind voice whispers 'slow is better'. So, I slow down. Sure enough. Slow keeps the fabric from taking on a mind and life of its own. Moving through the crowd until we reach the other side of the open space. When I look up and around our entourage relaxes and I can see that we have safely entered the space of women. All women. All ages. All different colored covering. Some completely in black. They wrestle to bring forward honored plastic chairs for us to sit upon. And not move. For what turns out to be for the next 4 hours. –Field note, July 31, 2016*

*Rows upon rows of colored veils that fall towards the earth. Girls upon girls sitting in obedience. More girls upon girls upon girls enter the tarped area, expertly and seamlessly removing their shoes before a single toe lands on the sacred ground covering. Some pause to retrieve their shoes. Others, just as effortlessly and seamlessly, slip their shoe under the covering just behind where they will sit. For hours. Girls upon girls. All ages. All colored veils. Some with babies strapped to their backs - some with babies who have faces too young to be mothers, probably sisters? Caregivers. Aunties. Teachers. It is the women who keep women in line. Still feeling the tugs and the hands assisting my flesh from being seen. The girls and women sit. Row upon row. The odd rock is thrown at a woman who slips by the watchful eye of the other. Row upon rows of women. On the other side of an invisible line is the space of men. Men and boys of all ages. Some dressed in traditional wear on this ceremonial day. Most not. Men dressed well – clean and proper. The young boys jump, run, play, practice handstands and sword fighting on the other side of this invisible line on this perceivably sacred ground covering. Boys. Doing as they please. Unmonitored. Unyielding. Unguarded. Free. After all, boys will be boys. The girls remain, row upon row, draped and disciplined. – Field note, July 31, 2016*

*It is time for me to move from my plastic chair. Again, hands emerge to tug and to fix the fabric upon fabric upon fabric wrapped around my entire body. This time it is my elbow that escapes from a crack and is quickly concealed back under the shield of fabric upon fabric upon fabric that dares not reveal. ... back into the van. The women disperse. Off comes the covering. Unknown to its weight until it is gone, and my jeans and cotton t-shirt reveal my ankles, my arms, elbows, and wrists. My headgear removed, my platinum blonde revealed. I am immediately transformed in a way that cannot be described. But I feel like I could sword fight, handstand, and maybe even fly. Hard to believe that a mountain of fabric could keep that all wrapped down deep inside. – Field note, July 31, 2016*

These strict gender roles devalue girls and provide preferential treatment for boys. However, the girls never speak about it. Indeed, there is an increase in advocacy groups and awareness

campaigns for women and sexual rights throughout the country. Still, the girls never talk or refer to their position in relation to the boys; that is, the fact that what the boys are allowed, they are not. The girls speak of their struggles and difficulties as a shared reality among them. However, the discussions, even if gently probed, do not turn towards unequal power or gender relations. The girls never speak about the boys. The girls only talk from their orientation of day-to-day life. The gender roles appear normal and are engrained with the girls that men and women are just understood as different and, therefore receive different treatment and benefits. The gender roles are not questioned nor challenged by the girls. However, the stakeholder interviews revealed the gender-related consequences facing the girls:

*At the end of the day they are the caregivers of the children. If anything goes on with the family, it is them bearing the weight, and they are drawn from school to take care. SK#3*

*The girl's housework again results in how they perform in classes and if they will they qualify for more educations and competence in the labor markets. SK#3*

*Really this is about developing self-confidence and self-efficacy. We wanted them to have a place that was safe, supportive and nurturing that would build them a role in their society that was not 'looked down on' or 'labeled'. SK#4*

Subservient behaviour is normalized and enforced, where critical thinking and a questioning worldview is not encouraged. Status quo is enforced through disciplinary measures, demanding expectations, and limited individual decision making among the girls.

*The chatter among the girls is excited after Nani Nani. We talk about the possibilities of seeing our goods there. But then the mood and flavor changes. The teacher leads the teachable moments. The girls gather and listen, as good students do. But with their heads bowed. The teacher begins to demand the answers to difficult questions – one at a time, until the answers are insufficient, and finally, the responses end. All heads bowed. All eyes looking towards the dirt. Shoulders dropped. Hearts deflated. Perhaps this is the African way. But what a missed opportunity to inspire and seek another way. –Field note, August 5, 2016*

The social expectations for marriage and children leaves very few options for alternate life choices. All of the girls wanted children, and they all wanted marriage. Children are valued in society, and having children is very much desired. As such, discussions around family planning and contraception are difficult to impress. However, with multiple children – some women with 'step' or 'stair' children, who are siblings born within two years of each other, creating a gradual increase in height among the children – the evidence of the toll on women physically and

economically is extreme, even leading to death. The force of social expectation is stronger than the experience of pregnancy and birthing itself:

*Babies. Why so many babies? Women and children devalued because there are so many babies. For us, the rich get richer, and the poor have babies. I hear the female doctor say: 'women have babies, or they have other plans.' But what are the other plans? What else is there to do? Birthing moms lined in a row. Forty babies are born a day. No more sutures. Bring your own linens. Squeegees moving body waste and blood across the floor. The smell, oh the smell. There has got to be other options. Other drivers and desires other than to repeat this experience. Over and over. No resources. How can we expect hospital births when this is where they come to, nicknamed 'the gates of hell'. How can this be the best choice? –Field note, August 17th, 2016*

*My dear friend, my dear host and guide, opens up and insists that his mother does not love him because she left him. A boy born from a union of a Christian man and Muslim woman with love unable to uphold the divisive nature of competing religions, is left in the care of his father – as his rightful property. His insistence on this fact moves me to investigate further where this sentiment could arise. I, as a mother, cannot simply accept that any mother is not at the mercy of god's given love for her child. But I look, and I can see. Evidence. A mother's sitting by the roadside, her bottom sitting on top of her turned down pail, body turned away from her sick child on the mat next to her. These children belong to their father. Fathers can, and most often do, return for their children. Girls sometimes becoming the house girl for the new family. The mothers left – child gone, challenges of bringing forth her child overcome along the way. Her own survival challenged, along the way. I recall a story of the 'quickenings'. When I felt my baby in my belly flutter, or 'quicken', for the first time, I fell in love. When a woman who faces detachment, or possibly death of her or her child, this 'quickenings' reminds a mother of the fact – one of you may not make it through this pregnancy and birth. How could I project the simplest of assumption and argument "of course you mother loves you", how can I speak for another mother? – Field note, July 12, 2012*

The area of most interest and engagement for the girls was around sexual health knowledge, learning when and how you can become pregnant. They demonstrated a minimal understanding of the reproductive system before the educational sessions provided by the female clinician for Mama Kwanza. This topic and type of knowledge translation are typically left up to the 'aunty' to provide it, and in traditional groups, initiation ceremonies deliver the teachings of sexual relations. None of the girls gave the impression that they intended to wait to have children, and the sentiment appeared to be more of an acceptance of what happens. That said, adolescent pregnancy is not well regarded socially, as seen in a birthing room at a regional hospital:

*Many young faces among the laboring bodies. One girl, moaning, scared, anxious, desperately looking toward the woman who sits beside her. Arms crossed, face frowned, words mumbled. The meaning is clear – there is nothing I can do for you. Why are these faces not happy? These babies were wanted, well at least not prevented. This birth will begin her path as a mother. Baby after baby. What else is there for a woman or girl to do? What else is there to do? I have heard others say: ‘A woman either has a plan or she has babies’. So, what’s the plan? Can we imagine – if you were a boy, or if being a girl didn’t matter, what would you want to do? My girls still say ‘Have babies. Have a family’. There is no other ‘plan’. So, be it, no? –Field note, August 17th, 2016*

The social risk of adolescent girls becoming pregnant can lead to isolation and increased vulnerability. There is a problematic connection between the desire and expectation for children, limited knowledge of sexual health, and undesired adolescent pregnancies. The girls are ready for pregnancy; it’s just a matter of time. The best option for unmarried girls is abstinence. However, this choice can be difficult during the adolescent years, and particularly in a male-dominated society.

The religious and moral grounding of the Tanzanian culture creates the framework and fabric for social norms and behaviours. With Christian, Muslim, or traditional roots, the ethical structures are robust among all people. The air is filled with the enchanting sounds of the ‘call to prayer’ and other moral reminders to live the way of one’s God. Religious regulation and spiritual connection are essential aspects of their social organization, deeply engrained and entrenched even among the young generation.

*We sit. We wait. We sit. We wait. Still unsure of the meaning of this event, I ask my 8-year-old translating friend, ‘is this a religious ceremony?’ She replies ‘no’. I ask, ‘what day is holy day?’ She, in her wisdom, replies ‘every day is holy day’. We sit. We wait. We sit. We wait. –Field note, July 31, 2016*

The girls of the Girls Group openly express that they “love God” and are “grateful to God”. Maintaining ‘God’ and considering religious protocols as part of development programs and projects is an important consideration. Religious and community leaders are essential to social organization and change. With the ability to override science, these (typically) male leaders are in a powerful position of control and influence.

*The hospital is quiet. Beautiful in its rawest form. A converted church from the colonial years. Decades of chipped paint on the walls. Dirty in the corners. Years of decay. Things have broken, but seemingly not noticed. Simply worked around. The colonial presence is still standing strong within the walls of the old, stately building. An even more beautiful smile greets us at the door. The head doctor. A*

woman. Two years from graduation from medical school, this hospital and its people are for her to figure out. We gather in her office. More people than chairs. More breath than breeze. More people than space. Joining our meeting, an old elder. A respected community leader. The young, beautiful, educated female doctor silenced once he enters. Subservient to his voice. An old man in weathered skin. Traveled three hours to be here with us, for our 9:00 am meeting (which begins closer to 10:30). Stern, hard face. Small worn hands. With pursed lips, a head shake 'no' would end all ideas and conversations. That head seemed only to know how to shake 'no'. There is no way around or through the tough mind, face, or hands of this man. This man, with the power to say what will come and what will go, what will change, and what will grow. My mind imagines having this face look upon me. 13-year-old me. 30-year-old me. A face that makes my own face, face down. This old face that looks right at me but doesn't seem to see me. This old face is regarded by the boys as a mentor of manhood. This early, stern face that provides the 'yes' or the 'no' and the determinant path for those in which he leads. This old face is the face at the gate of ideas and change. Without him, we go nowhere. -Field note, July 11, 2012

“Aunties” (‘Shangazi’) seem to be the primary guiding voice among the girls, but many of the adolescents that are not in school are without familiar or traditional leadership:

*The main needs are 1) psycho-social support. Parents are busy chasing the coins, and the youth are just left so what comes into my face over and over again is ‘who do these youths turn to when they need healing and direction’... the main one is looking for a model fatherly or brotherly or sisterly or motherly figure to turn to – this is the most significant need. SK#3*

Although the tradition is valued, and formally and politically upheld, families are experiencing changes in the structure of family units. The source of this disintegration and deconstruction within family units is unclear. Most of the girls were no longer living with their parents. The reasoning or details for girls leaving or removed from their family homes were not clearly understood. However, “conflict” was clearly expressed, “being denied” by fathers, and “FGM” was mentioned as challenges facing the girls’ current realities. Stakeholder interviews highlighted much of the phenomenon:

*Commercial sex workers are the main reason they are out there – is that their family has gone to pieces and less education and no way to get work. If you don't have access to family health services and information you are born into contracting pregnancies and adding to the whole issue. SK#3*

*it is hard to learn something – some come from hard family, and at home they stay with grandma or aunty – then they come here and cry and have feelings. SK#2*

*... then they go home and have to work hard – then they come here and then their*

*parents are not their real parents and do not support them coming here. SK#1*

*it was just important to be there for the girls and show them that they were supported and important. Look many of them are abandoned by their families and the 'system' so they are lost and if you leave them out there it is detrimental on many fronts. SK#4*

*Many of them have children and/or have had their children pass away, so it is a mixed bag of activities like counseling, helping them fight for financial support through linkages with local government offices, social welfare to get the fathers to pay support, etc. SK#4*

The girls and the social organization of the society, in general, rely on daily sustenance living patterns, compared to continued living demonstrated by saving and planning behaviours. “In the future”, conversations were difficult to have with the girls as projecting into the future did not seem to be something natural or spontaneous to them. A future orientation did not seem to be a priority in thinking and discussions.

*Westerners are driven, motivated, plan, schedule, expect, anticipate. Here, I see almost a 'disregard' of time. What happens at the moment carries the moment. An idea, a person, a conversation may take this moment, stall it, halt it, or take it in a completely new direction. If 'right here, right now' is all there is, how can we plan for the future? If we cannot see or visualize the future? How can we direct our lives? Are we not then subject to an ever changing, unpredictable, fair weather moment? What about wants dreams, drives, expectations? Are these not of value? Or am I simply a fiercely driven Western woman? Is that just my way? – Field note, July 25, 2016*

*Africa is a life of waiting. Waiting. Waiting. 'Stop to smell the roses' is not a saying, It's almost a vice. What's happening in the moment is what is central. Even the youngest child can sit and wait, and wait, and wait... life seems so simple in all its complexities, where life back at home feels so complicated in its simple ease. – Field note, July 12, 2012*

Even with the goal of “starting a business”, there was a limited understanding of what a business requires to be sustainable, such as saving money or ensuring that profits are sufficient for living and maintaining the business. Businesses can quickly end once the merchandise is gone. Having a business was desirable, but a business plan that requires long-term planning was a new exercise for the girls. One girl, who claimed that she wished to be a nurse, later reported that she also wanted a business. Starting a business, any business, seems to be the most practical and possible avenue to acquire resources for survival for the girls and not a determinant of ‘dreams and desires’. However, to meet this identified interest, the Mama Kwanza initiative offered options



for participants in the Girls Group for business development, training, and mutual support:

*We intended to help them develop a 'collaborative' or 'cooperative' approach to building small businesses. We showed them options – like sewing or food preparation or small crafts – and then tried to help them merge into a group that had multiple products, "Rather than the 'same' as everyone else. We also wanted them to design their own business plans so they would have a skill set for life.*

SK#4

Through a shared history and worldview, mutual support is evident among people and within the socio-political structures. Rooted in the Ujamaa policy for over 50 years, the fabric of the society is one of socialism and mutual support. This shared reality is fertile ground for cooperative, collaborative, and socially inclusive approaches to sustainable development. The interpersonal and group support among the girls was readily apparent:

*.... At last, the school lesson is done, and we go on to practical application work – sewing. The girls work, practice, try hard – for hours. Three at a time. The three remaining girls wait patiently for hours. Through frustration, tears, little successes, they keep keeping on. The odds are stacked against them. The machines themselves are painfully archaic. Old pedaled Singers. Constantly needing rethreading. Even the masterful must pause. Stop. Reset. Try again... Even the ungifted never stop the efforts. The most frustrated, through and past her tears, doesn't stop to eat until she has, in her mind, completed the task. Which takes her hours. Every smile from her is shared by others. And the smallest indication of stress is met immediately by one of the other girls who emerges next to her, in support. Meanwhile, the boys in the yard, of similar age and circumstance, work just as tirelessly on their never-ending flow of vehicles needing repair. These boys, the multitudes of them, are just as collective and cooperative. They seem to just move around each other. No loud voices. No obvious leader. Just deliberate movement. No any evidence of conflict or disagreement. Just a buzz of continual motion. Cars are coming, and importantly, going. The view is truly remarkable. Previously, currently, disempowered youths, supported, pursuing work. And working patiently, against many odds. Constant power failure – to name one. But these boys are blooming into strong, desirable men. New boots. Bright smiles. Clear eyes. The girls divert their eyes when the beauty of these young men flash. These girls are just as beautiful, behind their shy, bashful eyes that look away. --Field note, August 14, 2016*

The expression of support and endearment is a striking characteristic of the Tanzanian people. Touch is freely shared, men hold hands, hugs last a long time, smiles and special handshakes are greetings, relationships honored. Connecting to others physically and emotionally as a basis of social organization is an essential component. Although tribally and religiously diverse, the Tanzanian people do have a shared history and foundational worldview. Mama Kwanza and the

Girls Group also provided a learning space, a safety net, and a place of open support for one another:

*Emotional capacities ranged – for some, this group was an anchor and a new beginning allowing them to find and build a support network (this was a meaningful and unintended outcome). They became friends and would care for each other's children – knew each other's family matters – grieved together with deaths of family or children. I think in some cases they grew up together realizing they were not alone and their feelings were not unique. SK#4*

*For some, it was an opportunity to talk about issues and build knowledge; it was an opportunity to explore business and enterprise and ask question, to develop as a future business owner; it was a time to engage with peers on issues that they shared such as sexual choices, birth control, healthier choice. SK#4*

*Giggling, we hold hands, link arms, embrace as coupled units through the markets. The group of girls, all connected by invisible threats... We move through the masses of people like a single unit, led by our teacher. After more selfies and giggles, we pile back into our vehicle, like one large unit. Sharing selfies and snapshots of the day. – Field note, August 5, 2016*

The mutual support also provided an outlet for growth and give a voice for Mama Kwanza participants:

*the group can not only speak about their challenges, but it also has an opportunity to earn income and self-esteem and confidence to assume a role in society... they can understand each other and speak their voice out there and let others know who they are and develop an attention to them. SK#3*

#### **5b.1.4 Motivational and Attitudinal Capacities and Vulnerabilities**

Personal histories and struggles made it difficult for some of the girls to engage in the planning and skill-building offerings of Mama Kwanza. Personal trauma affects the emotional and mental health of individuals, and many of the adolescents served by Mama Kwanza have struggled personally, emotionally, and physically. These underlying circumstances hindered the effectiveness of the programming from meeting the desired objectives of the Girls Group. Existing vulnerabilities weakened the capacity of the girls to strengthen relations and connections within the group and collectively support one another and contribute to the overarching needs of the group:

*Some of them grow up in bad place and the environment. They were harder to get a relationship with. SK#2*

*Those who grew up in a bad place – they just do what they want. When you say this is not good for you, then they don't want to listen. SK#2*

*Take these girls – some did not go to school or stop school because mom or dad died, and some go to aunties or grandmas or go do the prostitute. Some are good some are not good. SK#2*

*It goes like this - they feel bad then they do something bad. SK#2*

Coming to Mama Kwanza with immediate unmet needs made it difficult to impress the importance of skill-building and proactive planning. Planning for the future is conceptual and a complicated process. The drive to meet immediate needs keeps the orientation of conversation and motivation for action to the ‘here and now’. The future is unknown and abstract. The present is demanding and challenging, requiring immediate reaction and response. As a result, many of the participants in the Mama Kwanza programming expressed unmet expectations when offered skill-building sessions requiring investment over a significant period of time. Many participants were not retained, and few met the ‘objectives’ of the initiative to build sufficient capacities to support transformational development. Most who came to Mama Kwanza were looking for work and ways to earn money, or for sponsorship and charity.

*In our discussion, group members show clear evidence of dependency – ‘find a sponsor’; ‘get a mzungu/white husband’ aired as goals. ‘If I could have anything’, a Tanzanian husband is decisively undesired. Finding a sponsor is the ideal situation. While finding a white husband is a fairy tale. –Field note, August 18, 2016*

The girl’s worldviews are shaped mainly by relational and social expectations to create families and have children, take care of the elderly and the household. The demands of the girls are many. Waking at 4:00 am (or earlier) to arrive at Mama Kwanza by 9:00 am is a norm among the girls. Duties of the “house girl” or “home chores” are expected from the girls before they leave and continue when they get home. Continuous living patterns demand effort to maintain daily tasks and meet daily needs. The girls are not able to provide a livelihood on their own and therefore, are in a state of dependency. It is difficult for the girls to make free choices and initiate change.

*...we give transport, food, training. That is more than money. There was another group who just wanted a white boyfriend. So, one quit because she wanted money. SK#2*

*We went out to the street to help them so they don’t have to live on the street. We give the start so then they have to continue. But they must go from there. Out of ten there is only one that goes forward. SK#1*

*Always money, money, money but the skill is more than money. They think they will just get money. SK#1*

*Intent is to build skill and to teach so that they don't have to live on the street. Three groups so far. Not stronger groups. All of challenges. They don't want to work, they just want to beg. That is the problem. SK#1*

*... sewing, farming, English, computers, working together, cooking, mechanic. But don't seem to have any interest. You can prepare here, but then they go and carry on with their life. Don't want or know how to change their lives. Just go back. SK#2*

*We try with the smart kids, the bright kids, when they are young. Just don't want to go back to school. We try a lot of kids we see here, and it is always one person or none of them. SK#2*

*It is patience. If you see something behind you have to watch for it. If you have patience it will grow. We just want it chop chop. SK#1*

*Nothing has changed. Life is the same and they feel frustrated. SK#1*

The Mama Kwanza program aimed to build a feeling of agency and group identity. Sharing experiences and building connection between the girls sustained some relationships among the girls beyond the project. However, the capacity or willingness to join, rather than merely support, personal efforts were not seen to have developed or sustained.

*They make relationships with each other to join together and do something together. They did not know each other before and they do together now. SK#2*

*They are doing great here. Not sure about their home. They keep in touch even though they did not know each other before they come from a different place. SK#1*

*They come day after day, and nothing. Nothing has changed. They don't even help out each other. SK#2*

The social relationships developed through their participation in Mama Kwanza shaped the experiences of the multiple Girls Group participants throughout the project:

*We do the morale of the support groups. We try to help them create – we call them YEG (Youth Economic Groups) where they can share their experiences and provide that supportive role to each other... they can transform their income opportunities and support for each other which gives them a voice for themselves in their families and society. SK#3*

*For some, there was growth in gaining a voice and exploring who they were in the 'bigger' sense of self. They learned to speak out and share as they became more comfortable and found that they mattered. I think this was a big win for some of the participants. SK#4*

Given the high reliance on relationships to meet basic needs and provide social supports, the spirit of resiliency and perseverance was shared among the group. The fondness towards one

another was also evident. A natural affinity and willingness to engage and connect physically and socially. Passive natures also resulted in calm and relaxed interactions. Open conflict, challenging opinions, and acts of violence are not instigated and are avoided by many.

Information and knowledge are increasingly available to adolescent girls, including targeted campaigns in terms of sexual rights, gender-based violence, gender equality language; however, gender roles are very established and rigid for the girls and primary education was limited:

*In this context, men are everything to women: husband, father, employer, teacher, social connection, name, household, family. She is, in fact, not equal because she has no means of her own. She is subservient to him and his wishes, to produce children and maintain a home. Often, she has been bought, and legally, his property. She must follow her man, leaders, and culture. Asking men to change in a male-dominated world is like asking Western households to give up their SUVs. It's the way our world turns. – Field note, July 29, 2016*

*As women, our worlds are so very different. I have a daughter their age. We are from different generations and different sides of the equator. We are beginning to learn from each other things we didn't know before. Maybe this is the 'change'. Learning how to do things. But learning how to do things together, for each other. I ask myself how I fit in this all. - Field note, August 15, 2016.*

*Health education was good with the girls, but some girls did not understand. Maybe because they have family issues, so they come and nothing – they just don't understand when you ask the questions. SK#2*

*A few of them do not understand and do not have good relations with families. They don't live at home and work in someone else's house. This is it. SK#2*

## **5c. Data and Findings: Capacity for Collective Action**

*There is no reason to believe that bureaucrats and politicians, no matter how well meaning, are better at solving problems than the people on the spot, who have the strongest incentive to get the solution right. (Ostrom, 2009, p. 420)*

### **5c.1 Revisit the Theory of Collective Action**

The contextual variables proposed by Ostrom (1990, pp. 55-56) indicate accounts and demonstrated behaviours which are conducive or detrimental to collective action, and examined within three spheres of analysis: 1) the features and structure of the Girls' Group; 2) flow patterns of social resources and economic conditions; and 3) attributes of the participating individuals. Examining the qualities of the individuals, the dynamics of the group, and the overall social structure of the Girls Group informs the discussion of the capacity of the girls to work collectively to support shared vulnerabilities and the potential for social development. The findings also support the question of the relevancy of the Mama Kwanza development project, accurately, and the global sustainable development approach more generally.

#### ***5c.1.1 Group Structure and Institutional Setting***

The Girls Group was a small and reasonably culturally homogenous group, with a tribal lineage as the difference between the girls. All were without formal education, looking towards the next steps into adulthood, and seeking a functional life that includes their own home and family. The marginal contribution of each girl was limited in terms of economic resources, but with much potential in terms of social support available within a collective group:

*Supporting and prepping each other, stroking each other's hair, sharing sweaters and jackets, asking each other for money to buy special finds (knowing that each has the same as each other – none and nothing). We all move through the masses of people like a single unit led by our teacher, our leader. – Field note, August 6, 2016*

Capacity building programming within the Girls Group was primarily initiated by program directors to get a sense of what activities the participants were interested in pursuing. The girls participated in all mandatory activities, some demonstrating natural inclinations and abilities, and others with apparent disinterest. However, engagement stopped after the activities ended, and evidence of personal agency to continue with the initiatives was limited. It was through much effort and encouragement from outside agents, such as Mama Kwanza staff, that would continue projects set up as capacity development initiatives:

*always collecting empty bottles and plastics is a good project. Is good. At first they were very stubborn but this is a golden chance that doesn't come twice. This is not your mother to make you a beggar. You must do it yourself. You have to do it for yourself. I say 'if you don't want help from this momma then just go and I don't want to see you anymore'. It is patience. If you see something behind you have to watch for it. Patience and it will come. Sometimes it is only one of them or none of them. SK#2*

*They just don't know how to start. It must be very simple because the challenges are very great. There is too much just come and sit. SK#1*

*Some girls like some things, some girls like other things. SK#2*

The grouping of people in Tanzania is done mainly by gender. The Girl's Group as a means for girls to gather and connect. This structure highlights an opportunity to build social capital within existing, socially inclusive networks. Connection through existing networks, everyday experiences, and shared realities, social groupings displayed the capacity to facilitate collective action for a common purpose.

*They need to have more voice to be heard, and then change can happen – it comes from them and all of them together. Improve their place in society. We need them to work in groups to improve their status. SK#3*

*One or two girls didn't like each other – but they find a way to work together – we find that in groups – there are one or two that just don't like each other – most like and worked together. SK#2*

Although the institutional setting appears customary, long-standing, and rigid, there is also evidence for the potential of institutional and governmental support for the needs and desires of the adolescents.

*We work through things such as risk analysis and setting specific objective aims and goals. We have been influencing policymakers to have a way to evaluate and organize vocational skills that provide this kind of initiative away from formalized institutions.... Get credit and evaluation based on your knowledge and skills and qualify for qualification and certifications – you will see a lot over the next five years. This current government is fewer politics and more let's get this job done. SK#3*

*... there is that again, the group speaks about change and supports that in this society, if that is the right way to go, then we should go. SK#3*

### **5c.1.2 Resource Flow Patterns and Economic Circumstances**

The girls of Mama Kwanza Girls Group are in a position of dependency and risk with a reliance on family members and NGO programming to support some of their essential needs.

However, the resources available, even within informal training and programming, is limited:

*The program could be better if we had a small house then the girls can stay there and eat there and after they are done then they can go and do what they have learned. They can start and learn to do something and make some small amounts of money – rather than go and come here without eating anything. Better to come here and stay here to learn. SK#2*

*When she comes here we can see she is smart, but then their parents either died because of HIV or something and then their person doesn't pay their fees. If she doesn't go back to school she will just stay at home and this is the problem. SK#2*

The limited resources for essential needs and services creates an immediate need in the participants to use the profits gained and creates challenges in planning for the future. Yet, the risk of participating may be too high when life and resource allocation demands daily attention.

*We have money here to get a start. Like we'll give you a start, you sell it, understand the profit and costs as business and continue. But nothing has changed. They see just profit and take it. We all get frustrated. And they just don't understand. SK#1*

*It's bewitching hour. The time before dusk is ticking. Alive but preparing to settle. The streets are most alive at this hour. With last minute gathering, the daily mission, come to a head. The air is body temperature, and bodies are moving through the air with efficiency. I watch from above – an observer and on looker. At first swipe, it looks desperate and poor. But there is no desperation or despair. There is just life. So much life. People are just living life. Joy, where there seems like there should be despair. – July 24, 2016*

Mama Kwanza's programming did fill a need for the participants. The incentive to work with the group and collectively meet shared needs was evident; however, the outcome and impacts of the programming were limited, and constraints faced by the girls were numerous:

*...getting food or making food to make sure they have their protein and things they need, and ways to get what they need, not just with meat. They know how to feed themselves, and their babies grow well then. Some have kids and what is cheaper or know other things too to give to their babies. They just don't know. SK#1*

*We can still meet together about how it is, but they need placements instead of keeping them here. We think we are helping them but it does not seem like it. Placements to practice what they want to do, so they start to understand how. If they do it more and more then after they finish here they can get a job or just know how. SK#1*

*I wish there was a wider base of networks of NGOs that can do some of the work. The government is minimal on funds and cannot get it done. The government would use 40% of the budget for development issues and 60% for recurring*



*expenses. But they would have to fix taxes and widen the tax base. Until this is done right, the only remedy will fall on NGOs and individuals... we need this support because we can only do so much – we are limited with what we can do mainly because of all of everything we need a budget. We have volunteers that are ready to show up and train and help with marketing skills and bookkeeping and different forms of training, but still need a stipend to keep people going. SK#3*

*Some come here from far away and don't have any money – not even nothing to eat. It's hard to learn something and some come from hard families and at home they stay with other families not even their real parents who don't support them coming here. They come here and are crying and have felt like 'this is not good for me' and then have to go home to work hard then they go out and do something bad. Then there is more trouble for them. SK#4*

*Capacity and knowledge exist. Infrastructure and resources do not. If we want to not replicate a system of dependency and neo-colonialism, we must ask, not tell; give, not take; facilitate, not direct; 'you tell me'. Change must come from within. We may see the need or the way, the details or the difficulties. But the motivation and the need for change must go strongly from within, or it shall never be. The greater the change, the greater the resistance. The want, the might, must be as strong as the desire to breathe – to leave the pain of staying within the bud is greater than the risk of breaking open and breaking down what is. – July 28, 2016*

### **5c.1.3 Individual Attributes of Participants**

The girls openly showed affection and supported each other emotionally during the problematic teaching and learning moments of Mama Kwanza programming. However, coming together to develop a shared enterprise was not well received by the girls. When asked if they would be interested in working together with the other girls, they replied with “Yes”. Yet, discussions surrounded business start-ups. Every girl wanted their own business, (except Hilda, an aspiring teacher). Still, not one was interested in working jointly with another. Even with financial incentives to enter into a joint enterprise with other girls, each maintained individual goals and objectives for their own business. In fact, in the three previous rounds of Mama Kwanza Girl's Group capacity-building programming, none of the groups were able to develop a shared or collaborative enterprise.

*Some continue to live together or share childcare – but there seems to be selfishness or individuality that comes to the money which we could not seem to shift to the collective. SK#4*

*Some just were not good and did not do what they could do. Others learned to work together with others – some just don't want to do anything and just want to do it alone. SK#2*

*Significant differences in interests, and, more importantly, intentions. There was*

*little desire to work together although we created opportunities and models to have this happen. They were resistant and even belligerent to the detriment of other people's progress in some cases. I have not understood that hyper-individuality. In a context where poverty and underemployment are rampant, there was a lack of insight that then permeated the groups. SK#4*

*Some simply wanted money to do their own business. SK#2*

Although cooperation and mutual support are a part of the communal mindset and political philosophy embedded in 'ujamaa' policies and practices, individualistic thinking trumped decision making in terms of business or managing finances with others:

*Their sense of collective continued beyond the group in terms of support and networking but not in terms of the financial and small business aspects that we had aspired to. SK#4*

*The intent was to go and maybe find a way to find money – maybe cook or sew or use the machine and sew clothes rather than stay home and do nothing – we join with other groups to teach the girls to make money, or we produce something because some of them have a baby at home. But some just were not good and did not do what they could do. Others worked together with others, but some just don't want to do anything and just want to do it alone – SK#2*

In general, the girls displayed limited self-efficacy and accepted their ascribed status. Little evidence was found in the belief in oneself to have the ability to create change or achieve self-determination and autonomy of choice.

*The last thing is for people to be proud of their knowledge, what they need is to make ends meet and put food on the table. SK#3*

*The idea has to come for them otherwise they don't want. Can find other groups and ask them to partner or help with them. SK#1*

*Education sessions were good, but some of the girls just don't understand – maybe they have family issues so they come and nothing – they just don't understand when you ask a question. –SK#2*

The key constraint of the Mama Kwanza programming seems to be the uptake of the incentives by the participants. A shared frustration among participants was that nothing was done for them and personal situations remained unchanged. At the same time, Mama Kwanza staff could see possibilities, action from within the group was without momentum:

*....in my opinion, there is a group over there that make peanut butter – they do everything, even the package. They are all working over there.... they need practice not just theory. They are the same age and want to work. Show them how to do it and that they can do it. How to make stuff. They just don't want. If we*

*create our own stuff, then you can do what you can instead of a dream of someone else not yours. SK#1*

*Disappointment and frustration arise in response to services received – we get nothing. Nothing? Every day for nine months and nothing? What was expected, if this investment was seen as nothing? –Field note, August 18, 2016*

*....and again, that was not a project possibility so their expectations were again not met – but were these needs and how far can we go? SK#4*

*Do an assessment then find the program for them. And follow up to see how they are doing. That is it. We cannot force them because then they won't do. SK#1*

Nurturing and building available social and economic capital, and developing shared interests and cohesive activities provide an opportunity for partnership and capacities to work together is a perceived avenue for advancing social development:

*What I would really like is outside advisors or third eye to kind of better see what you do – like locally we say 'you can't trim your own hair even if you are a professional barber' – you need someone else to look at you and help you look the way you want. SK#3*

*Among the girls in which I sat, watching the world around us, chatting about life pathing and planning. There is little inspiration or consideration of change. Other ways of knowing. We only just begun to meaningfully interact. Sitting with each other. Sharing our stories and thoughts. Practicing our skills. Computers. Sewing. Writing. Business Planning. When you know better, you do better. This learning also goes both ways. I, for example, can see that mutual support and open affection is more encouraging and supportive, hopeful and jovial, compared to that of the competition, critical opinions, and personal judgments I can feel in the suburban West. – Field note, August 2, 2016*

It is clear from the findings that while the girls openly supported each other on social and emotional levels, their willingness to work together or share in potential future profits was non-existent. The deeply rooted cultural and social norms and gender roles in Tanzania society keep the girls socially connected, but vulnerable and with the limited capacity of agency. The conflict between the uptake of services provided by Mama Kwanza by the girls and the lack of interest in the opportunities to progress their earning power by collaboration met with their expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of improvement in their situations, highlights priority of immediate unmet needs over long term vision and planning. Also, the limited 'purposive agency' made it difficult to reflect on questions when asked about strengths, weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and capacities.

In sum, the adolescent girls involved in the Mama Kwanza Girl's Group were a cohesive

group of youths. As a group, they shared similar ambitions and goals, similar life experiences, and were firmly socially bound and emotionally connected. The overall environmental and social demands on the girls were comparable, demanding, and time-consuming. The Mama Kwanza initiative provided some resources and services, while Green Hope NGO was a central meeting space. The setting was facilitative and resourced. The girls travel long ways to participate in the activities. However, the uptake and impact of the initiative were limited. The sustainability of the model was not maintained by the local group. The risk of participation was high, and the direct gain was low. The girls held individual and personal goals, and basic needs remained unmet. The project had limited resources, and the project did not reach the needs or expectations of the populations it served.

## **6. Discussion and Conclusion**

We are not students of some subject matter, but students of problems. And problems may cut right across the boundaries of any subject matter or discipline.  
(Karl Popper, 1963)

### **6.1 Sustainability and Social Development**

Sachs (2015) states that exclusion from social rights and responsibilities threatens all aspects of sustainable development. Testing models for social development and collective strategies framed in universal and inclusive rather than an individualistic philosophy is timely. Regaining the intrinsic human notions of mutual help and social support is essential to counter the discourse and sentiment of competition and scarcity. Although social connection and collective capacity shape the outcomes of a group, decades of studies on collective action are clear that there are no general or straightforward answers. Gauri, Woolcock and Desai (2012) emphasize it is the inability to understand and respond to collective challenges that make a group ‘fragile’. Social development creates the means to support shared understanding, social connection, co-learning, and co-ordination towards collective action. The shared space between individual needs and perspectives is the space of coordinated social action (Ermine, 1995; Plaskoff, 2003) and intersects for a common understanding of the problems and solutions individuals face (Gauri, Woolcock & Desai, 2012). Sawyer (2006), however, recognizes the fundamental mistake of assessing the needs and gaps of a group, but failing to reflect and acknowledge the capacities, creates various conditions of dependency. Guided by the World Bank’s (2018) indicators for measuring social development (gender equity; access to basic needs; interpersonally safety and trust; intergroup cohesion and shared goals; participation and engagement), this chapter discusses the capacities and vulnerabilities for collective action to support sustainable development. The discussion and conclusion offered are locally informed and globally applied.

#### **6.1.1 Gender Equity**

The pervasiveness of female disadvantage and discrimination is observed throughout TZ. The Mama Kwanza girls face gendered access to formal education and resources, are subject to and accept violence at home and in public spaces, have demonstratively less political representation and public voice, and face strict norms that enforce demanding patterns of time allocation and workloads. With apparent male domination over property and money, the girls

have unambiguously fewer opportunities and options (Boudet et al., 2012; Harper et al., 2018; Hobbs & Rice, 2013; Kevane, 2014). Adolescent boys and girls are socialized separately, and the girls were harshly and frequently disciplined, which maintained demanding social roles and expectations. The girls were passive and sexually submissive around the boys and are socialized to uphold rigid and discriminatory gender-based norms. The social replication of strict gender norms is generally enforced by other women, as evidenced by stone-throwing and chastising, and by each other through whispers and gossip. The strict gender roles are deeply engrained and were not questioned or critically discussed by the girls. Gendered practices are accepted, and often reinforced by other women, while entrenching a ‘culture of silence’ (Freire, 1970).

The greatest hope and aspiration from all the girls of Mama Kwanza was to find a man and have children; above all else, the girls wanted husbands and families. In sync with the sexual maturation of adolescence, the girls did not consider options outside this established social norm, and motherhood is accepted as desired and expected. African feminist scholars argue that childbearing is central to an African woman’s identity and being married is the capstone of social success (Nzegwu, 2006; Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004). The question is not if, but when and who. When pregnancies happen unintentionally and unexpectedly, provisions and protections to support a girl to delay parenthood are prudent. The earlier a girl ‘finds a husband’ or becomes pregnant, the more children she is likely to have over her lifecycle (Harper et al., 2018; Kuh et al., 2003) which concomitantly leads to more significant physical, emotional, and economic risks placed on her (Peters & Wolper, 1995; Rosenberg, Pettifor, & Miller, 2015; UN, 2010). Family planning methods and contraception are not used by the girls, while discussions and knowledge sharing on sexual health issues were appreciated. Choice matters. Dependency deepens and entrenches as the number of dependents multiply. If there is no other choice, what choice is there? The global need to level population growth, ideally through the voluntary reduction of fertility, is a leading factor towards human sustainability. Creating options and building the capacity of agency and choice over sexual health offers greater personal freedom of choice for girls and provides benefits for the global population. However, the recognition of the limitation for choice for adolescents, in general, and for the Mama Kwanza participants specifically, calls for adolescent centered services and options widely available for adolescent girls.

African feminists reject a Pan-African perspective where women are considered uneducated, traditional, domestic, and family-orientated (Choonara et al. 2018). However,

societal norms and gender expectations that reserve key positions for men, accept violence towards women, acknowledge that girls may not go to school, and tacitly expect mothers to continue to die during childbirth are not only recognized, but are preserved. The primary contrast, according to African feminists cited by Choonara et al. (2018), was that women in Western nations are viewed as being more educated and enjoy greater control over reproductive rights and choices. These views were echoed by the Mama Kwanza girls, whose primary focus was education/ training and planning for a family. Western feminists and researchers must be cautious of perpetuating the dangerous image of ‘third world’ vulnerability that universally denies agency and power of women and girls, with a “colonialized and victimized status armed with the promise of a powerful neoliberal agent with infinite potential and choices on a solidary journey of economic development and personal empowerment” (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005, p. 186). Even with well-intended support or encouragement, the paternalistic attitude of helping, judging, or condemning global women or local norms is a miscarriage and violation of feminism ideals and claims. Egbo (2000) purports that it is particularly vexing when African beliefs and practices of gender are problematized by Western but not African feminists. The girls of Mama Kwanza clearly wanted families. Supporting this desire as a deliberate choice is progressive and essential. But, as Okekek-Ihejirika (2004) argues, “any attempts by women to transform the dynamics of social relations for the better must involve women’s mobilization as a collective that can speak with a common voice” (p. 182).

The evolution of feminism seeks the self-determination of individual agency and the collective capacity to transform harmful or intimidating social, political, and economic structures (Momsen, 2010; Sen & Grown, 2013). This process of transformation cannot be imposed. Participatory practices deepen the engagement in issues and supports a new understanding (Longwe, 1998) as women and girls reveal their concerns and envision future pathways (WHO, 2015). Advocating for the normative construction of Western womanhood ignores the experiences and ongoing struggles of gender divisions and discrimination among Western feminists. Maintaining colonized images of Western benevolence and developing-world oppression embeds notions of Western normalcy, gender difference, and neo-liberal liberation (Simpson, 2017). Moreover, such promises and projections are false, and African feminism astutely recognizes many levels of oppression that Western feminism tends to ignore (Mikell, 1997). African and Indigenous women worldwide clearly have the strength and authority to

speak for themselves, while gender inequality does not always dominate over other forms of oppression and discrimination (bell hooks, 1952; Hill Collins, 2004; Mohanty, 2006; Simpson, 2017). In critiquing global policies of individuality and capitalism, it is apparent that Western women tend to focus energy and attention on institutional and global imbalances which perpetuate colonial domestic roles, which are often embedded in Christian beliefs about monogamy, patriarchy-dominant, and hetero-normative gendered social structures. This imperative is a shift in these conversations which move towards equity rather than imposing Western superiority.

### ***6.1.2 Access to Basic Needs***

With no income and few available resources, access to basic needs is limited for the girls of Mama Kwanza. Although the girls were hopeful and dedicated to participating in the Girls Group program, the requirement for basic needs left the expectations of the group well beyond the scope of the Mama Kwanza initiative, leaving the participants frustrated and disappointed at the lack of change and impact in their day-to-day lives. Drawing on case studies throughout East Africa, Harper et al. (2018) found that the interests of individuals in project activities are often motivated less by the value they see in program offerings and information provided, and, more so, in some sort of material gain to redress, even at a minimal level, pervasive poverty. The girls of Mama Kwanza were in a position of dependency, identifying income and employment as their primary need while pocketing transport money and persistently seeking charity and sponsorship. Needs were immediate, and the future is unknown. Working to secure basic needs and fulfill their household demands unquestionably impacted the girls' investment in and uptake of the project opportunities. In the context of acute poverty, few activities undertaken were not immediately required or related to survival. The vulnerability of the group to meet basic needs influenced the level of engagement and investment in the Mama Kwanza project, and the capacity of the project to meet the broad and often complex needs was limited. If striving to meet basic needs is the force behind choices and behaviours, investing in 'capacity building' and 'empowerment' initiatives through language courses and business classes are likely to be a waste of resources and fail expectations.

Establishing a state of survival is foundational to the advancement in the stages of growth, development, and evolution (World Bank, 2005). Unemployment is unprecedented and pervasive in Africa (ILO, 2017; World Bank, 2019). Few adolescents can meet the expectations



and rise to meet the expectations of neoliberalism and global markets, leaving the vast majority behind in terms of education and subsequent employment opportunities. With global unemployment rates at an estimated 12.5%, adolescents are three times more likely to be unemployed (ILO, 2017). Olominu (2018) describes that progression of schooling leading to a job no longer exists as the norm in Africa, hence, most adolescents are part of an environment where “everyone is an entrepreneur” (p. 39). The girls all wanted to be a ‘businesswoman’ and the problem collectively defined by the girls was the need for ‘money’, ‘income’ and a ‘business’. With entrepreneurship as the first resort for economic advancement (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010), investing in social development establishes the skillsets such as confidence, negotiation, networking, and communication necessary to operate one’s own business. The participation in the Mama Kwanza program exposed the girls to a widened network, with at least three of the girls securing paid employment through Mama Kwanza connections.

As entrepreneurship is the queen of the informal sector (Verma & Peterson, 2018), more community interventions and non-formal educational strategies are needed to attract those without formal schooling (UNESCO, 2017). Patton et al. (2016, p.14) warns that the “narrow focus on academic achievement diminishes self-esteem and increases student disengagement”, while increasing risk-seeking behaviours, including sexual risks and substance abuse (Kneale et al., 2013; Rosenberg, Pettifor & Miller, 2015). Creating opportunities and activities within the growing local/global adolescent population is part of a creative and innovative imperative which realizes the importance of out of school and non-formal educational settings to support the creativity of adolescents in engaging social change and innovation. The informal sector is dominated by women, and the informal market sustains a vast majority of those in the developing world (ILO, 2018; Ndoye, 1997; Pieper et al., 2016; Sawyer, 2006). The necessity to invest in applicable and transferable skills within the informal sector is a practical and desirable pathway for the girls of Mama Kwanza and potentiates effecting productive and sustainable change.

Educational, skill-building, and training opportunities are crucial drivers for promoting social development and economic advancement for adolescents (Spiel et al. 2018). Skill development and training programs for transferable skills provide an approach to building practical competencies. Targeting social development through social skills, direct engagement, and personal mentorship is an avenue for NGOs to support and strengthen the capacity and

success in both private and public sectors through esteem-building, critical thinking, communication, and negotiation. While their transformative potential is limited as long as funding is tied to specific outcomes (Aitken, 2007), the discourse and directives of NGOs typically focus on community-based local development (Shivji, 2007). Community groups, NGOs, and grassroots organizations are positioned to leverage resources to support the work of social development and influence policy to effect change targeting the most vulnerable (Bebbington et al., 2008). Green Hope, and other local NGOs primarily run independently with individual funding sources. The regulation and coordination of NGOs locally and globally are vital to leveraging their unique position of influence and access. The networking of NGOs is an innovative avenue for international funding sources to support coordinated and sustainable efforts.

The role of NGOs in the international development context cannot be overestimated or ignored (Shivji, 2007). Although governments have the responsibility and obligation to provide for their populations, the reality is that many are not able to. Many governments across Africa are failing to meet the needs of their people adequately, and communities are reliant on the services provided by NGOs (UNECA, 2014). Green Hope Organization, and other local NGOs, are the central point for care and services for the girls and are a legitimate source for the distribution of resources (Sen & Grown, 2013). For better or worse, the shift in the transfer of international funds from governments to NGOs has created a massive network of NGOs and community-based organizations positioned to receive/direct funds and to set (or implement) development priorities (Jeater, 2011; Shivji, 2007). Although this analysis only served to observe a very small NGO and the discussion does not scale to the broad sector of global NGOs, these organizations are diverse in their moral imperative and philosophical approaches. NGOs are uniquely positioned and profoundly rooted within communities and local contexts, with interests and perspectives ‘on the ground’. Networking and regulating activities of NGOs are an investment opportunity for training and experiential learning within the informal sector.

### **6.1.3 *Interpersonal Safety and Trust***

Community in TZ is its greatest strength as it provides a sense of secure and broad relations between people and families, sisters and brothers, neighbors and strangers. Social care and reciprocity are the long-held currency of development at the local level in TZ, where the social position is relative to one’s relationships, and responsibilities are based on roles.

Expectations are clear and shared, and ambitions fall in line with expectations. Choices are limited and needs are simple. Aspiration and inspiration draw from daily living, and social life moves through negotiating for what we need and want from one another. Men hold hands, and hugs last a long time. Exchanges between people are deep and sincere. The moral and religious fabric is one of the richest parts of the TZ culture, with a long history of cooperation and communal relationships. The history of Ujamaa development policies and the underlying foundation of cooperation is familiar in TZ. It provides an alternative development model where “the ethics and values that individuals use to make decisions in their personal lives are the same ethics and values that families, communities, and nations used to learn how to live cooperatively” (Simpson, 2017, p. 24). Ogwo (2018) argues that the sustainable development of sub-Saharan Africa can only be realized by “mental emancipation” (p. 171) by reverting to the socio-cultural African Ubuntu philosophy that is central to the region’s worldview, rooted in a shared economy and communal characteristics.

The informal sphere encompasses the bulk of the population in TZ. Not unlike a majority of their peers, as the girls ‘shifted’, ‘moved’, or ‘dropped’ from secondary schooling, their opportunities and networks shifted to the informal sphere. For the girls to be safe and successful in informal markets and sectors, building social skills capacities is critical. Social skills are required across life domains. They include the intangible and transferable skills that support the capability to relate and work with others, be adaptable and creative, listen, and collaborate (Gates et al., 2016; Roy et al., 2014; Sawyer, 2006). Although broadly defined and conceptualized, Merrell & Gimpel (2014) describe social skills to include: communication, self-motivation, leadership, self-awareness, accountability, teamwork, problem-solving, decisiveness, flexibility, time management, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills (pp. 6-7). Historically, social skills are not intentionally developed; however, social competencies are necessary to support the attitude, behaviours, and personal qualities that the girls require to navigate and negotiate their relationships with others to achieve desired goals. Although often overlooked and disregarded as ‘soft skills’ (Lippman et al., 2015), the shift values women’s contributions and emphasis of the necessity of social competencies across informal and formal sectors and structures (Montalvao et al., 2017; Murthy, 2001), while recognizing and aligned to relational-centric worldviews (Simpson, 2017; Ogwa, 2018).

Patton et al. (2016) recognize the importance of positive social skills and attitudes in order to enhance self-confidence, empowerment, social and emotional skills, as well as problem-solving. Lippman et al. (2015, pp. 2-3) suggest that developing social skills in adolescents should focus on building capacities in: i) positive self-concept, ii) self-control, iii) communication, iv) soft skills, and v) higher-order thinking, such as critical thinking and decision-making. Social skills, such as expressing ideas and developing negotiation skills, are linked to a wide range of positive outcomes within the household sphere, including conflict resolution, violence prevention, improved sexual and reproductive health, and gender relations (Gates et al., 2016; Nagaoka et al., 2015; UNDP, 2016; WHO, 2010). The targeted development of self-confidence and social skills within the Girls Group has intersectional and broad reaching value.

In the public sphere, developing social skills can encourage the critical reflection on and negotiation of accepted social expectations and status quo. The girls were discouraged from becoming self-sufficient or assertive. Questioning established traditional practices or acceptable normative behaviour may bring much social and political resistance and backlash (Balchin, 2011; Kyomuhendo Bantebya et al., 2014). While challenging harmful gender norms and advocating for climate protection practices, adolescents across the globe are discouraged from openly questioning socially accepted behaviour. Encouraging sustainable patterns will require normative behaviour to change across the world, including developed nations, toward a new universalism. Building the capacities and social development of global youth is critical. The necessity and ability to challenge the wishes of parents, elders, leaders, or general social tenets that do not lead to social equity or environmental sustainability will require skills and capacities to work in partnership across generations (Alfven et al., 2019; Kennelly, 2010; Ogwo, 2018). Coates & Howe (2014) illustrate that the negative or indifferent attitudes of adults towards adolescents, alongside a lack of confidence in the engagement process among adolescents, are common barriers to development. Attitudinal barriers are common in cultural contexts where adolescents, especially young women, are perceived as subordinate and excluded, in the maintenance of the 'status quo' (Patton et al., 2016). Meaningful engagement with and active participation of adolescents are pivotal and critical to deterring passive, dependent, or apathetic attitudes (Kennelly, 2010).

#### **6.1.4 *Intergroup Cohesion and Shared Goals***

Achieving social and practical goals through collective action is crucial for sustainable development (Sachs, 2015a). While the girls clearly and openly supported each other on social and emotional levels, the collective or joint agency within the Mama Kwanza Girls Group was not reliable. The Girls Group was a small, cohesive group with shared goals; however, their needs were high and agency for change was low. Rooted in cultural social norms and gender roles, the girls never questioned their ascribed capacities. Immediate, unmet needs were a priority over long-term vision and planning, while change seemed unimaginable and unachievable. Olson (1965) and Ostrom (2000) discuss a range of conducive or detrimental contextual variables impacting collective action. Given relative scarcity and unreliability of resources available to the girls, their dependence on relatives and family, limited leadership skills, lack of collective identity or shared vision, along with insufficient motivation, the lack of intentionality for collective action or a shared “collective identity” (Defourny & Develtere, 1999, p. 25) was to be anticipated and expected.

Adolescents require mainstreaming of meaningful engagement models if innovations and developments are to be sustainable. Such models must advance intergenerational, communal, and cross-cultural sharing and learning while building capacities, skills, and knowledge. Nyerere (1968) reminds us of the imperatives of a postcolonial system:

has to foster the social goals of living together and working together for the common good. It has to prepare our young people to play a dynamic and constructive part in the development of a society in which all members share fairly in the good or bad fortune of the group .... Our education must therefore inculcate a sense of commitment to the total community and help the pupils to accept the values appropriate for our kind of future, not those appropriate to our colonial past. (cited in Hyden, 1980, p. 273)

Through the revival of Indigenous knowledge systems, novel, inclusive and sustainable social development may be realized (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005). The formal education systems in Africa have little relation and applicability to daily living and survival and even less relevance to advancing local knowledge systems (Cooper, 1994; Ndoeye, 1997). Africanizing schooling systems undoubtedly could create critical consciousness and applied knowledge among the people, and, in turn, widen alternatives and other ways of doing business in the emerging and emergent local and global spheres. The time is upon the continent to reject colonial pedagogies

which invoke passivity and compliance, rather than voice and innovation (Feldmann, 2016). Patton et al. (2016) found clear evidence that a positive school ethos is associated with improved sexual and physical health, higher level learning outcomes, and a positive self-image among adolescents. Indigenous knowledge systems are pragmatic, naturalistic, and amenable to social and collective development (Dodson, 2003; Domfeh, 2007; Meyer, 2001). Paradigms of educational and related social development approaches that are African-centric inherently reflect African norms, religious and moral beliefs, local culture and language, inclusion and emphasis on practical skills, and social competencies for across the lifespan. Such an Indigenous shift in the education system can re-shape the local and global ethos on shared sustainability goals.

The notion of ‘sustainable development’ appeals as much to ‘undeveloped’ nations as ‘developed’ nations. However, the narrative and discourse of partnerships, shared targets, SDGs, and Agenda 2030 is far more prevalent in ‘developing’ than ‘developed’ nations. Governments and NGOs are situated to promote development goals within their own countries and “provide examples within the intellectual, political, and moral community of directing and participating in global sustainability initiatives” (Bebbington et al., 2008, p. 27). However, changes in behaviours and policies toward sustainability and inclusion are limited in capitalist countries, and neo-liberalism is the well-established conventional mind frame where “there is no alternative” to capitalism (Kennelly, 2010, pg. 29). The politics of the “third way” (Defourny & Develtere, 1999) strengthen the populace or the ‘civil society’ and social economy to refute or mitigate the power of global corporations. This space of cooperatives, associations, and organizations opens a networking opportunity for NGOs and community-based organization to effect change in the global reach, aimed at promoting social and human approaches to development and responsible capitalism. Sustainability and rethinking the relevancy of the neo-liberal development approaches provide space for Indigenous communities and collectivist thinking. International resistance to socialist policies at the global political level cannot be ignored. The early failure of the Ujamaa policies leads to a discussion of limitations to the philosophy, rather than outright rejection of social approaches to development. The legacy, promises, and potential of Ujamaa social policies as an endogenous self-reliant development strategy is with merit and has earned its place in ongoing discussions and debates on shaping future development strategies in Tanzania and beyond.

### ***6.1.5 Participation and Engagement***

The capacity and willingness of the girls to participate in the program and activities responded to two primary identified priorities: schooling and earnings. Despite challenges and obstacles, the Girls Group participants showed up every day and cooperated with the learning exercises with a willingness to participate and engage. All the girls shared the desire to go to school and get a job. Without access to the formal education system, the girls defer to the informal system for learning and earnings. The training programs and educational sessions provided by Mama Kwanza clinics and Green Hope Organization were well received by the girls. The girls were interested in seeking ‘know-how’ and to learn new skills. With the transference of skills at adolescence as critical, the interest and desire for literacy training and applied learning is a promising avenue for social development among adolescent girls. Although the Mama Kwanza project provided a learning environment for skills training and social support, the initiative did not provide an avenue for the girls to apply their learnings or provide a connection to a broader network. This lack of application of developed skills or engagement in income-producing activities perpetuated unmet needs for the girls, creating frustration and discouragement. Providing work placement, internship opportunities, and creating other partnerships with local groups could serve as preceptors and mentors for the girls. This development opportunity for the Mama Kwanza initiative would further provide an avenue for the adolescents to engage in income-generating and targeted skill-building activities.

With Green Hope Organization, the Mama Kwanza project had a deep reach into the local community; however, the initiative was not able to create sustainable change or meet project objectives. Common to many NGOs, Green Hope provided for the welfare of specific ‘vulnerable’ and ‘target’ groups, including women, children, orphans, and youth. Green Hope provided a ripe space for participatory mechanisms and collaborative efforts. However, attached to funded project objectives, programming was predetermined, and participants did not produce nor adopt sustainability plans. Green Hope Organization stakeholders and staff represented local interest and provided insight and connections into the community. However, the direct participation of the participants and the use of Indigenous or local knowledge to improve livelihoods were not part of the project design. Moreover, as “mediating institutions” (Harper et al., 2018, p. 111), the supportive environments of NGOs, such as Green Hope, are bound by the sociopolitical and cultural context that provide significant constraints to transformational change

proposed by the program objectives (Ezeoha, 2001). As such, sustainable outcomes were not implemented or achieved by the program. Coates & Howe (2014) argue that when adolescents shape and drive programs directly, it helps to bring realization and understanding of their vulnerabilities and priorities, while ensuring the problems are accurately defined, and programs are well designed. For sure, the participants in Mama Kwanza did not ‘own’ the program nor the activities, and, instead, were passive recipients of programming directives. As such, the participants remained overly dependent on the project resources, and were consistently discouraged by the program outcomes.

An indirect approach of the project design taps into the major challenge of development work, which is related to concepts of ‘underdevelopment’ (Wallerstein, 1961). A ‘culture of dependency’ (Frank, 1979), or a ‘culture of receipt’ (Scott, 1995), is evidence of a deficit mind frame and hegemonic experience of people who become complicit in their oppression and exploitation (Kovach, 2009). Participants continued to attend the program to receive food, training, or charity but were not positioned or inspired to take the initiative to adapt or advance from their current state. Active participation in program development and design is in and of itself capacity building, while thinking cultivates cognitive development and growth (Coates & Howe, 2014; ICRW, 2001; Jacquez et al., 2013; Mansuri & Rao, 2012). The engagement experience had the potential to increase the consciousness of the girls to identify priorities and find ways to meet challenges individually and collectively. The girls were very talkative and shared widely with each other. The ability to articulate reasons for choices and desires, while demonstrating critical thinking is evidence of Giddens’ (1984) ‘purposeful agency’. Engaging environment and conditions that support purposeful agents and build social skills can be transformative for adolescents but was not affected or enhanced by the Mama Kwanza programming.

Inherently social environments that are informal, engaged, and provide reciprocal learning can help overcome feelings of isolation that many adolescents are experiencing globally. Providing skill development and refinement of social skills supports adolescents to understand their current stresses, connect with others, make informed decisions, and be better equipped to deal with increasing challenges and insecurity of the current global economic, political, environmental, and social systems. NGOs are well-positioned and working with adolescents and youth groups through community-based programming to foster social skills



through the arts, technology, media, sports, and entrepreneurship (Heckman & Kautz, 2012). Engagement and social development among adolescents, in both the African collectivist and Western liberal nations, potentiate the possibilities for an evolution of thinking and harness capacity and agency. Although adolescents in Western nations are able to envision and reach for possibilities and promises of advanced capitalism, they are also disadvantaged due lack of transformative capabilities and abilities, and often appear apathetic or frozen within the status quo (Kennelly, 2010). Social development among adolescents worldwide will have broad-reaching impacts.

## **6.2 Collective Action: Potential and Limitations**

Ogwo (2018) posits the ‘people-orientated philosophy’ of the African Ubuntu paradigm as the capstone of the worldview in sub-Saharan Africa and acknowledges its congruence with the UN (2018a) SDG mission to ‘leave no one behind’. Swantz (2016) identifies reciprocity as the basic principle governing social relations in TZ and describes the propensity for many TZ women to self-organize into cooperative and solidarity groups, with the exception of those in the extreme income groups (i.e., lowest and highest). Development ideals and the need for alternatives, which are grounded and informed by Indigenous worldviews and local realities, make TZ Ujamaa development philosophy relevant as a legitimate search for a ‘third way’ to development. As a self-reliant and cooperative development strategy, Ujamaa asserts collective participation and localized cultural values by strengthening the social sphere of development. Merging and informing the SDGs with local philosophies, such as Ubuntu and Ujamaa, has the potential to solve some of the “ideological crisis and existential challenges caused by conflicting worldviews... at its ideological roots” (Ogwo, 2018, p. 159). In a globalized world, tradition can turn to modern, and modern can turn to the tradition as a way to co-learn as our issues are complex and intractable without the interaction of different knowledge systems (Agrawal, 1995). The challenge is to reshape educational models and governing structures to incorporate the development and delivery of social skills and locally based competencies to ensure that communication and mutual respect can occur.

Supported by these research findings, the simplest explanation for what holds back social development and collective organization is inherent individualism (Scott, 1995). As a collective group, the Girls Group functioned as a stable and cohesive unit and provided social support and emotional safety for each other. However, individualistic ‘entrepreneurship’ desires trumped the

effort or willingness to cooperate on a joint enterprise. Although ‘having my own business’ reflects the global push for increased economic development as a means to secure a livelihood for the girls, the goal to have a business does not necessarily require an individualistic approach. A social enterprise or cooperative structure could be beneficial, in theory, to support the girls to meet their shared goal of entrepreneurship (Roy et al., 2014). Social business models were practical and available to the girls but received minimal attention due to the insistence on individual businesses by the girls. Bauman (2004) describes how the profit-driven standard of capitalism creates “individualized consumer-citizen” (p. 499) valuing personal over the collective imperative (Kennelly, 2010). Before the rise of individualism and autonomy, dependency on social relations was commonplace and expected (Polanyi, 1944). Ermine (1995) warns about rejecting approaches that deny practices of inwardness, and courage to achieve holism. Fragmentation is embedded within the Western worldview and ideology (Bohm, 1996), and, according to Purpel (1989), contributes to a moral and spiritual crisis among Western nations. But, not to despair according to Awuah-Nyamekye (2009), there are possibilities that individuals can remain central in development models yet serve the collective whole.

Harper et al. (2018) reflect on the shift from collectivist systems towards a more individualistic culture, and questions whether the expression of ‘agency’ exercised under conditions of limited choice is in fact a “positive expression of choice” or, rather, “a desperate response to circumstance” (p. 89). The constraints in human development are firmly rooted in social and group norms, and humans, as social beings, cannot be understood solely in individual terms. The very product of our existence is in relationship to others. The findings of this work reflect that the local context is at the core of normative change, and it is precisely the conditions that restrict adolescent girls from achieving potential capacities are rooted within the powerful influences of capitalism and patriarchy. Agency is the ability to operate somewhat independently of the constraints of the social structure (Calhoun, 2002). However, “purposive action” (Giddens, 1991, p. 11) leads towards a high degree of conscious intentionality and is based on a relational understanding of agency (Lovell, 2000). The development of relational agency, including self-confidence, resilience, choice, and aspiration, underpins Sen’s (1999) position of the freedom embodied within the development of capabilities. Although normative social structures are slow to change, a ‘tipping point’ occurs where shifts and new norms become established once a sufficient number of people believe an action to be appropriate and are prepared to undertake the

means necessary (Gladwell, 2006). This critical mass to shift policies, discourse, values, adaption, and individual values is possible and requires “disruptive innovation that focuses on radically new ways of thinking and doing business” (Assink, 2006, p. 221).

### **6.3 The Local / Global: Observations and Further Research**

Given the economic, environmental, and social fragility of advanced globalization, investment in social development and transferable skills is critical to secure a pathway for global solidarity and sustainability. Relational approaches to research, practice, and partnerships recognize collaboration and interdependence of collective knowledge, while maintaining the “relational necessary to maintain a collectivist tradition” (Kovach, 2010, p. 16). These relational learnings and teachings are within our Indigenous and ‘underdeveloped’ nations throughout our globe. However, social development, in terms of inclusion, equality, and relational learning, are rudimentary and minimally supported within Western nations and global structures, which operationalizes in highly dysfunctional and divisive social space. Incorporating social skills, such as communicating, negotiating, listening, and reciprocity within formal and informal structures, has massive reach into the population. The formal structures and networks deeply established in Western nations have a potentially broad scope and enormous impact on social development. Cultivating Indigenous, local knowledge and livelihoods will draw on millennia of Indigenous collectivist epistemologies to support our current global fragilities. Formalizing and implementing effective partnerships based on both Indigenous and Western principles are positioned to ensure mutual interest (Relevance); mutual benefit (Reciprocity); mutual responsibility (Responsibility); and mutual respect (Respect) as a critical starting point for sustainable development (Moniz, 2015; Verma & Petersen, 2018).

Patton et al. (2016) describe affirmative youth development programs that are “community-based and seek to promote life skills and positive attitudes, including self-confidence and empowerment, social and emotional skills, and good problem solving” (p.31), while challenging harmful traditional gender norms and relationships. Regardless of level of development, most countries underinvest or under-utilize the potentials of adolescent-led programs, including coaching, peer to peer, and mentoring support services, as means to meaningful engagement (Bastien & Holarsdottir, 2017; Coates & Howe, 2014; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017). Providing formal and informal training of life and social skills will catalyze stronger livelihood and practical choices. And, of important, there is a need to create case studies

and stories of adolescent-led programming and implementation strategies for approaches to social development to inform future and ongoing development work.

Sachs (2016) recognizes that Western countries have primarily ignored discussions about sustainable development, yet he quotes that “73% of Americans believe that the country is on the wrong track” (n.p.). Sachs further argues that “any society that is built to last must look beyond a culture of greed and profit, and toward honesty, solidarity, and sustainability” (Sachs, 2016, np.). Sustainability reflects effectiveness of measured attempts to leveraged local and global partnerships, and highlights “natural processes and relationships that bring things together” (Ostrom, 2000, p. 27). Such processes of inclusion require collaborative strategies that cut across research disciplines, cultural boundaries, and social hierarchies. Identifying as a qualitative, community-based researcher, I am convinced that we cannot do it alone. The time is long over when we can marginalize or ignore development evidence that shows us the paths and methods needed to capture mutual understandings and raise the consciousness of people (Gauri, Woolcock & Desai, 2012). Engagement and participatory practices create shared meanings and experiences that bond individuals together, and, in turn, direct collective action. Planning and discussing ways to shift practices and priorities to prepare for a post-capitalist world are long-awaited and well over-due. This practical shift is the decisive factor if the SDGs will carry on a tradition of development rhetoric, or if equitable participation and engagement can be realized.

The local/ global space is nebulous to describe, but perhaps an opportunity for reflection and re-imagining. Where there are similarities, there are differences. Where there are trends, there are specifics. It is, by definition, the space in-between ‘worlds’. This negotiated space requires social development and competency skills for a post-capitalist system of policies, practices, and partnerships (Sachs, 2015b). With evidence of increasing despair, isolation, and mental illness worldwide, relational and collective traditions have much to offer in our future directions for social development and sustainability. Investing and prioritizing ‘good relations’ and inter-connections is an opportunity – or perhaps an imperative - to resolve unsustainable patterns and pathways. Sustainable development at the forefront of local and global development creates a critical space for land-based and collective cultures to support and direct development approaches. The investment in social development, within both the informal and formal sectors, brings forward individuals who can communicate, collaborate, reciprocate, resolve difference, creative think, and problem solve. These are the essential capacities and skills needed to support

inter-personal, inter-cultural, and inter-generational equitable and sustainable goals. As articulated by local Mama Kwanza Girls Group leader: *They [the girls] need to have more voice to be heard, and then change can happen – it comes from them and all of them together to improve their place in society” [SK#3]*. It is indeed the collective voice that is the ripple in the system to create waves of transformative change for an equitable and sustainable future for all.

## Epilogue

*Decolonizing research is the process of challenging researcher privilege through honest reflection of subjective reactions to the data. The work is subjective, and the researcher can embrace the vulnerability of laying forth their understanding and their changes as a result of the ultimate partnership within their relational partnership. (LaVallie, 2019)*

To allow for a full and continuous circle, we come to the epilogue, where, “the only voice I can represent is my own, and this is where I place myself” (Brown & Strega, 2005, p. 99). A pause, space, is needed to recognize how we are changed and transformed from our experiences, from the teachings and learnings we receive. As Kovach (2009) suggests, “if you don’t acknowledge yourself in the research process, then you will always have a piece missing” (p. 108). Reflexivity assures the process of revealing, layering, and consciousness-raising to what is uncovered in the research process, from the initiation to the completion of these efforts (Bourdieu, 2004). Such an exploration also ensures that the work is not simply, or merely, a means to an end for an academic credential; but that the work has meaning and value -- to me as an individual, my relations and networks, the participants and communities, and ideally, to some level of the global whole. You, the reader, are also part of this reciprocal relationship and reflexive process. Wilson (2008) writes that the value of providing space to integrate the intrinsic value of the research, in turn acknowledges the responsibility of the work to strengthen connections and insights. The more fully we comprehend and integrate what was learned, the higher our awareness and consciousness of the power and impact of reflexivity to “mediate the role that objective structural or cultural powers play in influencing social action and are thus indispensable to explaining social outcomes” (Archer, 2007, p. 5).

Throughout this inquiry of sustainability and equity, I have become keenly aware of and awake to the dynamics of gender relations in the world that raised me. Just as women led the charge, ‘women rising’ and gender empowerment are predominantly a woman’s issue and concern. Gender roles are primarily enforced and reinforced on women, by women. Just as observed in the TZ context, the methods and means of socialization, enculturation, and determinacy of gender roles are enforced on women by other women, worldwide. Western women are in constant competition with each other, both consciously and unconsciously, overtly and covertly. Women in the West may not throw physical stones at one another, but comment and critique of each other are most prevalent between and among women. Women-supporting-women and a ‘sisterhood’ among women is a widespread and popular concept in 3rd and 4th

wave feminism (bell hooks, 1952; Dean & Aune, 2015; Miss & Jenna, 2019); however, the position has yet to take firm hold in the social norms and practices of Western nations or within the prevailing mindset among our women.

Experiences of lateral harassment and violence are commonplace and pervasive among Western women. As women advance and grow beyond traditional roles and expectations, the progression is often met with resistance, jealousy, sabotage, and harassment from other women. I have witnessed women betray one another to gain favour with male figures, and challenge other women in the professional work environment more rigorously and critically than men. Women in traditional support roles may resist women in leadership positions, while dynamics may produce women who excessively power-down on their female subordinates and mentees. Western women habitually treat men differently than women counterparts, where male peers and leaders often are held with more respect and authoritative regard. Power relations within gender fuels lateral violence and perpetuate feelings of insecurity and inadequacy, leading to feelings of lack of personal power and agency. This behaviour among women is often unspoken, overlooked, and thus, remains unconscious – in turn, perpetuating inequitable gender dynamics among and between Western women. However, the ‘how to’ and promise to overcome competition and insecurity between and among women is found in the strengthening spheres of social development. Supporting and upholding women, by women, in genuinely supportive, collaborative, and safe environments is hugely transformative for gender relations. The power of collective women is truly transformative. Western gender relations could be more influential locally and globally if women operate in an ‘empowered’ manner that uplifts, rather than compete with other women, a power dynamic often wielded through emotional, material, and physical means.

The next wave and evolution of gender relations are evident within Western adolescents and has moved the discussion to one of non-binary, ‘gender fluid’ identities characterized by sexuality without difference, preference, or divide. A time in history when the Miss Universe title is contested by a transsexual-black-woman. Generations before are challenged to witness an ambiguity of non-determinate gender identities and a seemingly overcoming of division between humankind based on a male/female divide. Yet, here we are. The third space of neither here nor there. Expanding and encouraging choice and sexual agency, beyond the domestic duty as wife and mother. Beyond colonial gender-regulated sexuality, corrected gender expressions, or

enforced obedience and compliance. To this end, Simpson (2017) argues that Indigenous, social kinship, and communal approaches are well-positioned to replace the hetero-normative nuclear family, while Okeke-Ihejirika (2004) argues that marriage “was not designed to be a nuclear affair” (p. 32). Given global changes in family structures and communal relations, familiar and legal institutions will need to be aligned with a moral imperative to operate, regardless of gender. Moving beyond gender divisions is a genuine transformation in societal norms, cognitive structures, and dualistic thinking.

Adolescents are inherently social. Social development is an entry point for generational change. Creating and developing transferable skills and social competencies to cooperate and collaborate within shared ethical spaces can overcome binaries and work within and between worldviews. The third space is where difference is allowed. Divergence finds its way to convergence. The ‘me’ finds itself within the ‘we’. Embodiment and entrenchment of social skills and the ability to relate, connect, and understand another with a disparate worldview are critical. The collectivist tradition has a tremendous contribution to social development, and with this pillar of sustainable development sorely underdeveloped, it is an opportunity for local/global nations to learn mutually. Social development and social skill competencies are critical to support other ways of thinking, knowing, being, and doing. Indigenous and African knowledge systems have much to offer Western knowledge and epistemologies. Epidemic levels of anxiety, apathy, distrust, and suicide in the West have produced a generation of adolescents mostly without the physical or emotional capacity to organize for alternatives. The need to regenerate our relationality and form strong, sustainable relationships with each other supports our weakest link. We face the consequences as a species as a result of unprecedented growth and limitless profit. Without regard to limits of the natural world, or actions at the expense of others, our common species cannot sustain. Collectivist traditions based on the interconnection and cooperation between peoples are critical to sustainable development.

After sifting and reading through development literature for over a decade, the space I wish to fill is the need in development research and practice for more qualitative, Indigenous, local, participatory, collaborative, and interdisciplinary research. We need actual evidence and examples of working together to decolonize the research process by listening and hearing, cooperating, collaborating, and sharing knowledge. The central tenet of participatory and collaborative approaches is the recognition that all people have ‘expertise’ and experience to



contribute to any issue facing their lives (Cleaver, 1999). Participation has transformative potential for both the researcher and the researched, and for the audience of any work produced, as we gain a deeper understanding of global processes and outcomes. The process of participation itself has the power and potential to be transformative, producing ideas and innovation to address complex issues facing us all. My work draws together the necessity of interdisciplinary and multisector research to collectively learn from an ‘other’s’ knowing. Interdisciplinary work is inherently difficult, but intrinsically valuable, as it works outside disciplinary boundaries and established canons of knowledge (Cummings, 1989; Fairbairn, 1994; Gibbon et al., 1994; Klein, 1990; Lury, et al., 2018). It requires merging and shifting of theoretical underpinnings, sharing leadership and scholarship, moving from narrow perspectives, philosophies, cultures, and agendas. Allowing parts to be pieced together to get a better picture of how the whole can, and does, work. The point is to discuss and deliberate. To invent and invest. To learn and to grow. Drawing on our ‘relational agency’ (Burkitt, 2016) invites others into the conversation and priority setting. This relational space and connective forces nurtured through social development can also propel adolescents to participate, to reflect on what we do, and to acknowledge that what we do matters. A critical shift from liberal individualism recognizes our collective experiences in this globalized world.

This work is a call for the involvement and collaboration as an attempt to widen the conversation beyond the Western bias and domination of global priorities. This is a conversation that I am part. All worldviews have the inherent right to shift and grow. As Wilson (2008) describes:

[I]f reality is based upon relationships, then judgement of another person’s viewpoint is inconceivable. One person cannot possibly know all of the relationships that brought about another’s ideas. Making judgement of another’s worth or value then is also impossible. Hierarchy in belief systems and social structure and thought are totally foreign to this way of viewing the world. Thus, egalitarianism and inclusiveness become not merely the norm but epistemologically inevitable. (p. 92)

How we understand and interact with others, how we can see outside ourselves, and, in turn see another, is of value. To decide what we will stand to represent and stand up against, we need to hear the voice that may not be raised. This work requires listening when an ‘other’ is speaking. People need to find their way and understand for themselves the dynamic and interconnected situation in which we find ourselves. We all need the skills to learn how to engage with others in

conversation, dialogue, participation, critical thinking, critiquing, and conscious decision making. Thought and reflection are real activities, while discussing and discovering new ideas and discourses are real in their consequences. The process of participation itself has the power and potential to be transformative. In my attempt to understand the ‘other’ (Mead, 1934) in the use of my ‘sociological imagination’ (Mills, 1959), it has become clear that people operate from their histories, narratives, material, cultural, and environmental conditions. People’s lives are not ours to research and scrutinize -- as we will indeed never really truly understand.

The shift to participation and collaboration in research speaks to me as a standard search for a new understanding and the co-creation of knowledge to solve joint problems. As Kovach (2009) affirms:

The relationship begins with decolonizing one’s mind and heart. Non-Indigenous academics who have successful relationships with Indigenous communities understand this. This means exploring one’s own beliefs and values about knowledge and how it shapes practices. It is about examining whiteness. It is about examining power. It is ongoing. It is only after carrying out this personal and institutional examination that scholars and disciplines can be in a position to acknowledge Indigenous knowledge and what it means in changing an organizational culture. (p. 169)

This work does not end here. An ending is but a new beginning. To describe how I have evolved from this work as an individual, scholar, community member, and human, I cannot adequately represent in words. The impact is observable and transformational. This work changed how I work, how I relate. This work has shaped what I value and prioritize. I now contribute to the globalized sustainable development platform, in my individual choices and in ways to provide legitimacy for the ‘development agenda’ to bridge the seemingly widening gap between communities, understandings, and worldviews. The failures of the economic system and political organizations worldwide stresses the need for a secure and cohesive social sphere with diverse cultural, religious, and spiritual origins and orientations. Such research efforts may strengthen our cultural and social fields to provide insight into the potential that sociality, interconnection, and relationships offers to the global development agenda. It is crucial to see each other as partners and rethink where our unequal relations originated, and what truth this holds in an era of decolonization and global partnerships.

I declare myself an ally. I align with so-called ‘alternative’ ways to re-image ‘new’ ways. I make the place and space for others to contribute. I recognize the need to lean back and allow others to lean in. Beyond my actions and intentions is the need and requirement for the inclusion

of the intrinsic value of the Indigenous, collective, and relational worldviews. I am a visitor and 4<sup>th</sup> generation immigrant on land that has become my home. I recognize and reaffirm our relationship to each other and the land, the home, the globe, we share. This work has led me to one grounded point: global sustainability requires joint agency to shift the common prevailing paradigm towards collective, connected, and relational thinking. We are in this together. We are connected. As all the tree roots are interwoven under us, and the air flows as one above us, humans are no different and are not separate. I affect the whole, and the whole affects me. Our difference is superficial and only skin deep. One thing that becomes very clear to me when surrounded by Tanzanian women is that I am a child, and toddler, in this human evolution. The capacity, resilience, and social fabric built by African people is beyond my own. We have much to learn from those who came before us. On our shared path of development, we must find our collective power to make choices and adopt changes that work in alignment with social, environmental, economic, and political structures to sustain the health, wealth and wellbeing of the people and the planet. If we can do this, I believe that we can sustain as a people. To ignore our common ground is to do so at our peril. We have much yet to learn, and even more to share. But first, we need to listen. There is greater wisdom beyond our own.

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## **Appendix A: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

- 1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
- 2) End hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture;
- 3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages;
- 4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
- 5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;
- 6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;
- 7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;
- 8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all;
- 9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation;
- 10) Reduce inequality within and among countries;
- 11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
- 12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- 13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;
- 14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;
- 15) Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss;
- 16) Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels;
- 17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

(<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.html>)

**Appendix B: Ethnographically Informed Community and Cultural Assessment: Cultural Systems Paradigm (CSP) (Whitehead, 2005)**

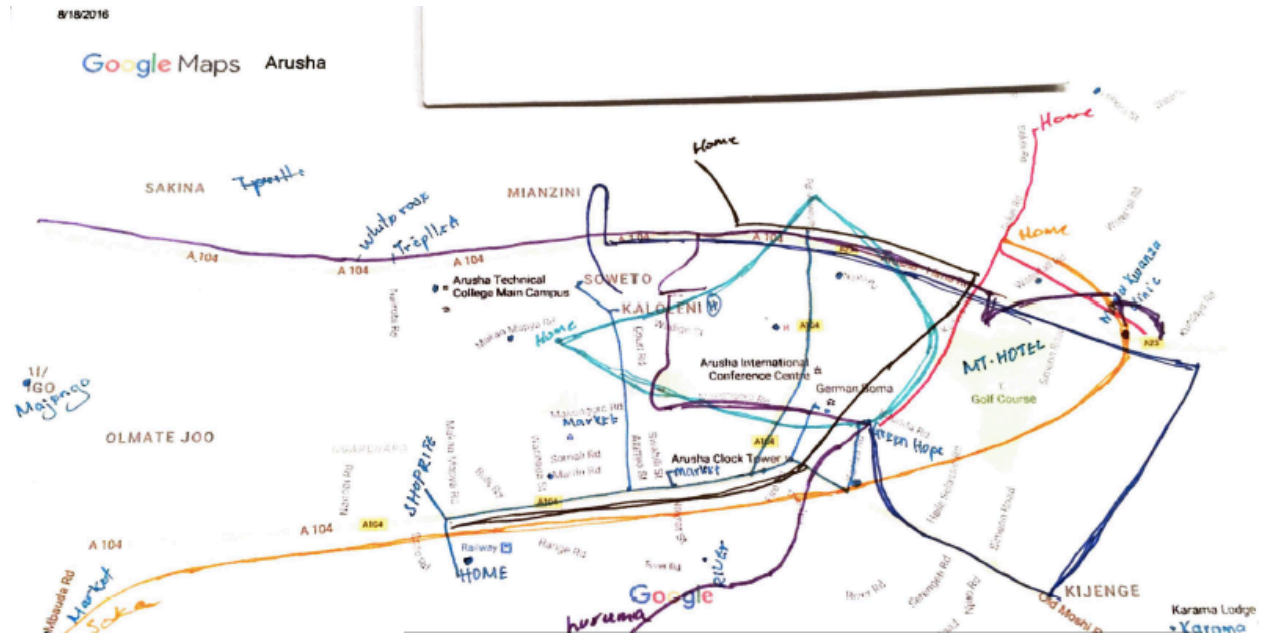
- (1) The individual human - biological status, personality and idiosyncratic tendencies (including agency), “intelligence,” skill set, etc.;
- (2) The social system - social relationships which individuals interact within, are influenced by, and have an influence on (networks, community organizations);
- (3) Individual and collectively shared behavioural patterns;
- (4) The significant ‘idea’ systems - knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values held by individuals and embedded in the social system;
- (5) Expressive culture as represented in such forms as language, music, art, etc.;
- (6) Technologies and human made material objects, or material culture;
- (7) The physical environments in which individuals interact;
- (8) Needs to achieve the level of physical functioning necessary to the survival of the individual and group;
- (9) Shared history of significant events and processes.

## Appendix C: Field note

July 31. Day 1 - the most significant cultural experience in my life to date. A muslim community celebration. A bag of fabric begins the journey. I put a couple pieces to wrap my body and head and take a seat on a long journey down this road and that, through crowds and streets (so-called) and finally to turn into a road lined with shops and vendors, which opens to a large open space filled with people, rural community people. A tent has been lifted, loud speakers playing islamic music, tarps laid upon the earth encircled by huts and houses with the center of the community. The largest, most well maintained yet dismal building the mosque off in the near distance. The running motor is enough to bring curious children to investigate. Their sighting of shiny white faces is enough to bring more children in swarms, 5-6 deep, encircle the whole straining for a glimpse. One boy, in traditional gear, with the face of a holy sage

emerges from the depths to connect his eyes with mine. His hands come together in ~~prayer~~ prayer in front of his chest. Mine, ~~also~~ familiar to the gesture, immediately do the same. Both heads bow in acknowledgement and reverence. The vehicle sits, ~~idling~~ idling. I wonder why we wait. We sit so more in this standstill until one travel companion emergence from the crowd with two seriously important community women, who enter the van, shut the door behind them and stand looking, gazing, analyzing these two foreign women. After what seems like many moment and thought loops, the two women get busy on us two white women, ~~unwrapping~~ unwrapping and rewrapping the meters and meters of fabric over our body and head, reaching into the bag of fabric for more wrapping and wrapping some more. When it feels like no further wrapping is possible they nod and open the van door. We shuffle ourselves, trying to

## Appendix D: Group Spaghetti Map



## **Attachment E: Photobook**